JUDAS AND JUDE

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JUDAS

(A Study of Possibilities)

AND

JUDE

(A Study of Contrasts)

By the Reverend

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Author of "The Prayer of Faith," "The Epistle of Christ," "The Faith of the Gospel," "Sundays of the Saints," etc., etc.

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Part One

JUDAS:

A STUDY OF POSSIBILITIES

JUDAS AND JUDE

CHAPTER ONE

HIS CALL

Much of the story of Judas is left to conjecture, for he is mentioned but rarely in the Gospels, and always with a certain reticence of horror. There is no record of his call to the Apostolate but this is true also of half of the Apostles. The Synoptics give detailed accounts of the calling of SS. Peter and Andrew, James and John. St. Mark notes especially the calling of St. Matthew and St. John adds the circumstances of the vocation of SS. Philip and Bartholomew. But of the others, including Judas, there is no special mention; their names appear first in the lists of the Twelve given by the Synoptics, and in each instance the name of Judas is followed by the shameful characterization "who also betrayed him" (Matt. 10:4, Mark 3:19), "who was the traitor" (Luke 6:14).

Legend tells us very little concerning Judas, preferring to occupy itself with names of edification. The Apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy represents the boy Judas, possessed by Satan, and brought by his parents to the Holy Child to be cured. The demoniac in his ravings struck our Lord on the right side at the moment when the devil came out of him—"and that same side, on which Judas struck Him, the Jews pierced with a spear." Longfellow's recension of "The Golden Legend" repeats a number of similar stories, but of what might be called authentic tradition there is none.

The name "Iscariot" very likely means "the man of Kerioth," as the Jews frequently adopted the name of their native place as a sort of patronymic (cf. Philip of Bethsaida). Juda was a very common name, shared indeed by another of the Apostles, whom the sacred writers are always careful to distinguish by the parenthetical "not Iscariot," and whom the English speaking Church has thoughtfully transliterated into St. Jude.

We may, then, exercise our religious imagination, and picture to ourselves the calling of Judas as taking place on a bright Spring afternoon, in the little town of Kerioth among the

southern hills of Judea, for, unlike the rest of the Twelve, Judas was not a Galilean. It would be in keeping with the character of the man that he is discovered as a small shopkeeper, sitting in the archway of the marketplace, his goods spread about him, when the Saviour passes by with his little band of followers. That the divine vocation was given in the usual formula "Follow Me" we need not doubt. There may even have been a promise, as in the case of others of the apostolic college, though this would hardly have been so,—who knows, perhaps a bargaining on the part of the shrewd merchant. If St. Peter could say, after weeks of discipleship, "Master, we have left all and have followed Thee; what therefore shall we have?" (Luke 18:28), surely it is not a stretch of the fancy to imagine that Judas, a man obviously of much less caliber than the others, may have haggled with his Lord before he closed his shop. Perhaps the appointment as treasurer was given along with the call, as a fitting position for one whose small dealing with money had trained him to the economy which must always have been necessary in dispensing the slender means of the "Poor Man of Nazareth."

At any rate the call was given, and accepted. We wonder why. For our Lord knew from the beginning who should betray Him (John 6: 71–72). He knew that Judas was the unfortunate wretch who, in the councils of God, was foreordained to the necessary, but no less unspeakable, perfidy of the scandals that needs must come (Luke 17: 1).

Yet we cannot, in charity, think that this was all that our Divine Lord saw in Judas, the sole reason for the extension to him of the highest opportunity ever given to man. Surely there must have been some element of integrity in Judas, some spring of piety, some aspiration towards goodness and nobility of character, which was not hidden to the searching eye of Him, to Whom all hearts are open, all desires known. We can have nothing to do with that hard and narrow Calvinism which would represent even a wretch like Judas as foreordained to damnation.

That our Lord knew what the end would be does not preclude the freedom of the will of the man, which at some time or other had to make the stupendous choice between loyalty and cupidity, and voluntarily to decide to play the part of the craven and the ingrate. Dare

we say that Judas did not have his chance? Dare we think of him as whirled along in an irresistible vortex of determined evil, helpless in spite of his struggles? The very meagerness of the narrative of him in Holy Writ, as we shall see, precludes such a thought. No, Judas had his opportunity—he might have been a Saint. The call which our Lord extended to him was genuine and bona fide, a call, not to the eternal and inevitable obloquy of the office of traitor, but to the high and holy Apostolate, to the witnessing of Redemption. And it was to "part and lot" in the apostolate that Judas raised himself, from whatever motives may have been in his mind, by his acceptance of that call. Rather we must think of him as enthusiastic, filled with the dream of "Redemption in Israel," however materialistic and unspiritual, as the other Apostles were filled with it; fascinated by the winsomeness, on the human side, of the Great Teacher; awed, as were the others, by the signs and wonders he was called to witness as the divine mission of Christ was more and more fully enunciated by Him and attested by miracles.

As we may not doubt the reality of the vocation which our Divine Lord extended to

Judas, so we need not question the sincerity of purpose with which he, at the first, responded to it. The shame and pathos of his tragic fall would be robbed of their horror were it not for the fact that Judas might have been a saint; that he *was* called by Christ to sanctity; that he did set his hand to the plow and his feet to the way of Peace.

So we vision him, leaving his little shop in Kerioth, becoming one of the band of devoted followers, who were singled out especially from the rank and file of the increasing number of disciples, going about over hill and dale with the others, resting with them under the shade of palms and cypresses in the heat of the day, enjoying not only the public discourses of the Great Teacher, but also the more familiar conversation of those intimate and hidden hours when it was given to the Twelve to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God which could, as yet, be told to the world only in Parables (Matt. 13: 11).

In all this, no less than in the Call itself, was Judas' opportunity. No less than Peter, or James, or John, he heard and saw; he was blessed with that closer companionship which turned them from ignorant crude peasants into

the glorious saints which they became. What a privilege—to be of the few who knew Jesus Christ personally and intimately, as He went in and out among those whom He came to seek and save; to hear Him speak as never man spake; to witness the glorious miracles by which His stupendous claims were attested.

Judas must have heard many a discourse which the Evangelists have not recorded for our comfort; he must have seen many miracles of which we possess no record; before his startled eyes must have been called back to life dead whose names we know not. But above all, so far as personal and individual opportunity is concerned, was the constant companionship, the personal knowledge of Jesus Himself, which Judas shared with the others, and by which alone of all of them he failed to profit. For to know such a man as Jesus (to speak only in human terms—how much more when we remember that He was Divine and what the growing sense of that Divinity meant to the Eleven) must have meant, ought to have meant, not only a growing awe and wonder, but an increasing love and intense personal devotion.

But this, it is easy to see, was not the effect

which constant intercourse with our Lord had upon the mind and heart of Judas.

It was said of the Apostles that the enemies of our Lord "knew them that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Such companionship as was their high and holy privilege during the three years of His earthly Ministry, could not but leave its impress upon them. Indeed we may reverently say that such was the purpose of the vocation given them, not only that they should be "witnesses," in the legal sense, of the life, death, and the resurrection of Christ as historical facts; not only that they should be foundations of the organization which He placed in the world to carry on His work after He had gone back to the right hand of His Father; not only that they should be the *media* through which should come to future generations whatever of His knowledge and grace might be transmitted to the world; but that they should become like Him, and show us also how to become like Him. For that is the purpose of all intercourse and intimacy with our Divine Lord, to change and modify those who come in contact with Him, to uplift and purify, to inspire and sanctify, to unite more and more fully in word and will

those who place themselves within the sphere of the Divine influence "until we all meet into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4: 13.)

CHAPTER TWO

HIS VICE

What, then, was it that brought the downfall of this man, who might have been a saint, who certainly was called to the Apostleship and granted favors so extraordinary that they made of the others, his companions, saints indeed?

The traditional view of the vice of Judas, that it was avarice, would seem to have much to commend it. The Evangelist St. John tells us that "he was a thief, and having the purse carried the things that were put therein" (John 12: 6), and it is plainly indicated that it was the covetous desire to have the handling of the three hundred pence the precious ointment might have realized, which called forth the Apostle's protest against Mary Magdalene's apparent extravagance (Mark 14: 5). Yet he masks his vice well—the quick estimate of the value of the ointment (there speaks the shop-

keeper) is instantly covered with the pious phrase "and given to the poor."

Is it not always so? Does any vice come single and alone to ensnare the soul of man? Rather is there not a hellish alliance between the deadly sins, an infernal combining of forces, one weakness supplementing another vicious propensity; and back of them all, of course, stands pride, the most Satanic and insidious of all.

So the vice of Judas was avarice, and with avarice came the mean and petty vices of hypocrisy and furtiveness. It was not enough that he should love money with that consuming passion which (we are warned by the Holy Ghost) is the root of all evil; but he must cover that vicious idolizing of a mere creature with a hypocritical pretense of piety and charity. Charity! The very opposite of his vice, the very virtue which, because of his vice, he had become more and more incapable even of feeling, to say nothing of practicing. "He was a thief and had the purse." How often had he pretended to have given alms to the poor, when in reality he had transferred the money from the common purse of the Apostolic band to his own? One could hardly suppose the meager funds of the

little company of wandering disciples would have been sufficient to constitute a temptation. But, remember, avarice is the vice of the miser —and the miser is essentially a small man, and miserliness a small vice, in the sense that it narrows and constricts a man's interests, impoverishes his sense of value, till even the penny becomes an object of desire so keen and potent that decency and honor are forgotten. It seems impossible that a man would sell his friend (and such a Friend) for thirty pieces of silver, only $16.96 of our money. And this sense of wonder, perfectly natural wonder too, has led to all sorts of speculative explanations as to other possible motives on the part of Judas.

One modern playwright has represented Judas as an ardent patriot, anxious to see his Master restore the kingdom again to Israel; gathering an armed force of Galileans to rally, when the time should come, to the command of Jesus and so drive out the hated Roman usurpers and place the Son of David on the throne of His fathers. Disappointed that our Lord should allow the advantage of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to pass without proclaiming Himself King, Judas

sought to force His hand, thinking that once confronted with arrest and the danger of death He would summon not only "twelve legions of angels" to His support, but also the armed band which Judas and other Messianic enthusiasts had long had in training. The outcome was so different from what he had planned and hoped that suicide was the only relief for his disappointed zeal.

A famous motion picture has portrayed Judas as the carnal lover of Mary of Magdala, and has seen in her conversion and in her spiritual devotion to her Saviour, the cause of the mad jealousy of Judas, who sought to make way with the Master whom he hypocritically served, in order to win the penitent Magdalene back to himself. Seeing her at the foot of the Cross he realized that her conversion was honest and permanent, and in despair, and perhaps remorse as well, he died by his own hand.

But we need not abandon the scriptural and traditional view of the vice of Judas. Indeed, to do so would be to raise his sin out of the sordidness and pettiness which makes it so utterly detestable, and so to rob it of the great and profound lesson which we ought to learn from it. For were it not for the awful

example of Judas Iscariot it might be doubted whether we would estimate the sin of avarice in its true degree of viciousness. There seem to be, and are, so many other sins which we consider to be worse than covetousness that we are apt to forget how downright wicked and depraved a vice Avarice is—not so much in itself, perhaps, as in what it leads to. It led Judas to betray his Lord and Master; surely not that the price he received for doing that dread deed was more than a bare *quid pro quo*—not in the cheap selling of what was of more value than the wealth of all the world lay the dreadfulness of his guilt, but in the debasement of a mind and heart which God had called to, and given the opportunity of reaching, the heights of sanctity.

How, then, came Judas to sink so low? We cannot think that his degradation was accomplished in a minute, indeed, what we learn of him in the Gospels, and our knowledge of what we might call the psychology of sin, precludes such a view. We can say, almost with certainty, that he fell by little and little; that first it was but the yielding to discontented thoughts of his lot in life, dissatisfaction with his circumstances; (and when you remember

what his circumstances were during that three years companioning with Jesus you begin to realize how unworthy such dissatisfaction was), perhaps a lack of faith in the providential care of God which prompted him to undue concern over laying-by what might be necessary for the proverbial "rainy day."

However the temptation began, it grew with each repeated yielding to it. Little by little the vice, low, petty, sordid as it was, blinded the man, robbed him of his higher faculties, made him furtive and hypocritical, may we not think almost unhinged his reason yet so as to place the mental overthrow just short of depriving him of responsibility. To this it grew from such small beginnings! The thirty pieces of silver were money—it mattered not whether much or little—it was money. And money was all that Judas cared for, all he was interested in, all he could love.

It is quite plain that the vice of Judas had the same effects that any vice, yielded to and encouraged, has in any man. And that is to distort and twist the sense of the value of things. Men do not sin for the sake of sinning, they do not seek evil, but some fancied good. In this lies the cleverness of Satan, that

he presents evil always in the guise of good. Was it not so from the beginning? Does not the Old Serpent still represent that the forbidden fruit is good and something to be desired to make one wise, or happy, or rich?

Once a man yields to that spell, once a man accepts evil and makes it for himself a desirable good, all his sense of moral values becomes unbalanced. For man was created to seek and follow after the good, the true, and the beautiful—it is his nature to seek what he conceives of as good, and sin is at bottom a false ideal of what is good. First the man is deceived by Satan, or by his own sinful nature, into believing that the forbidden thing is really a good thing for him. It becomes evil because he makes it his own against the prohibition of God and of the moral law. And once convinced that it is good he follows after it with all the powers of his being, powers which were meant to follow only after the good, but which have been diverted and distorted till at last the true good, the highest beauty, is hidden from the sin-bleared eyes of the sinner.

Doubtless Judas thought that it was a good deed he was doing when he stretched forth his eager hands to receive from the High

Priest the price of blood. By what conceivable distortion of reason and judgment he thought so we cannot even guess. Yet—we do the same thing again and again, whenever we allow temptation or passion to blind our eyes to that which we know to be our highest good.

CHAPTER THREE

THE WARNINGS

St. John tells us that our Divine Lord had the foreknowledge that Judas should betray Him, and that on one occasion at least He let this be known to the Apostles by way of warning to Judas (John 6:71–72). There must have been many other times when the tender Heart of Christ yearned over the man whom He had chosen, and whom He knew would become worse than an apostate. Again and again He must have given Judas opportunities for amendment, graces which, had he made use of them, would have enabled him to overcome his viciousness in its beginnings. For our Lord never pretended to be blind to the human imperfections of His Apostles.

It is well for us to remember that the Twelve were men, that they underwent a long schooling and many temptations before they were endowed with power from on high. Not that their weakness is any the more excusable,

for they had great favors shown them, but that our Lord Himself did not expect of them more than was humanly possible until He had sent to them the supernatural gifts which transformed them into heroes of the Faith and pillars of the Church. Even the Prince of them He rebuked for his worldly spirit on one occasion (Matt. 16: 23), and all of them were warned that Satan desired to have them, that he might sift them as wheat (Luke 22: 31).

The uneasy conscience of Judas, not yet quite seared over by his vice, must have taken these warnings as meant especially for him, as perhaps indeed they were. We cannot imagine that our Lord let him go on in his wickedness, in the slow deterioration of his character, in the formation of his nefarious plans, without giving him the opportunity to make a clean breast of it all and fling himself on the divine mercy. Nor were these warnings confined to verbal hints, as the incident of the didrachmas shows (Matt. 17: 23–36). Judas, not Peter, was the Apostolic Treasurer, the one to whom the duty of paying the tax would naturally fall, yet the Lord works a miracle for St. Peter, and sends him to make the payment. True, the assessors had approached

Peter, as the primate of the Apostles, but the direction to him to make the payment rather than Judas *must have been a very clear hint* to Judas that he was under suspicion as to his honesty.

And as the moment approached when he should consummate his iniquity the warnings must have grown more frequent and more plain, till at last, in the Cenacle itself, when the thirty pieces of silver were actually in the traitor's purse, the divine compassion of Christ gave him one last opportunity for repentance ere it be too late. "And whilst they were eating, He said: Amen, I say to you, that one of you is about to betray Me—And Judas that betrayed Him, answering, said: Is it I, Rabbi? He saith to him: Thou hast said it." (Matt. 26: 21 and 25.) It would seem that even then, in that supreme moment of Judas' last chance to undo the work he had done, our Lord spared him the humiliation of open exposure. Only St. Peter and St. John, to judge by the inspired narrative, knew of the warning. The others, when Jesus said to Judas "That which thou doest, do quickly," thought that the apostate, slinking out into the darkness, went to "buy those things which we have need of

for the festival day: or that he should give something to the poor" (John 13: 27–29). But quickly the last of many warnings had been given, and, like the rest, had fallen unheeded upon the sin-deadened conscience of the man who had, little by little, made the soul-destroying choice between the Best Good and the basest evil.

Indeed it would have been strange if the other Apostles had been suspicious of Judas. Their common and implicit trust in their Master overflowed in mutual confidence each in the others. They knew, dimly, yet with increasing certainty, that they were called to no ordinary discipleship; they were so impressed with the uniqueness of their vocation that they could even imagine themselves as sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. There was plenty of the human spirit still unsubdued in them when on the way to Capharnaum "they had disputed among themselves, which of them should be the greatest" (Mark 9: 34). Yet it is plain that this spiritual ambition, if we may call it such, did not preclude a very tender and trustful companionship. They all knew that they were but weak men, though they all knew that somehow they were being prepared

for a tremendous ministry which would, sooner or later, lead them to prominence and even to death.

But first they were tested; they walked with Christ up and down the ways of Galilee, they heard His voice, they saw His miracles; but along with this surpassing privilege went temptations. Satan sifted them as wheat. Doubts assailed them, for who is the earnest religious soul, walking with Christ, who has not been visited at one time or another by doubts? Our Lord delivered His great sermon on the Blessed Sacrament; saw the multitude turning away from His "hard doctrine," and said to the Twelve: "Will you also go away?" Was not that a test, not of their faith but of their doubts? Their answer showed their growth in the knowledge of Him with whom they were companioning, "Lord, to whom shall we go: Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6: 67–69). On the hillside of Galilee they stood the test; not so in Gethsemane, where they all forsook Him and fled. But, mark you this, they all came back, even Thomas the Doubter, unable to believe without seeing, but quite evidently heart-broken at his own skepticism. All this before their

full consecration to the episcopate, all this before Pentecost. After that there never was any question about any of them. They had endured the test of fire, they had been purged both by sorrow and by joy, by doubt and by the piercing fires of faith, and they came forth pure gold. Judas alone failed in the real and ultimate test of character to which they were all subjected. Failed, because he would not heed the warnings of his Master, even as he would not use the graces showered upon him during the three years discipleship. Failed, because from the beginning to the end his interest was not in Jesus Himself, but in what Jesus might do for him, bring to him, give to him. Failed, because his first love was of self, rather than of that Other whose whole life and teaching was the denial of self-love. Failed, because from first to last his will was wrongly directed, because he set both will and affection not on those things which are above, but upon the very earthiest of earthy things—money.

We see in Judas not only an instance of that deterioration of character, that blunting of the finer sensibilities, that warping of judgment, which is characteristic of the mind which has voluntarily given itself up to the pursuit

of some degrading vice; but also that heedlessness of warning, that refusal to face the consequences, that headstrong unwillingness to turn while it is not too late, which also marks every man who sets his will towards evil without, perhaps, realizing that in doing so he has necessarily set it against the good.

We sometimes wonder how it is that people who have slipped by little and little into evil ways yet insist on keeping up the semblance of religious practice. Can they not see the incompatibility of their professed belief and their actual practice? No, sometimes they cannot. Sometimes, of course, it is merely the force of habit that keeps them going to church and saying their prayers and carrying their beads in their pockets, but more often it is a strange lack of realization that in making up their minds to live evil lives they have rejected the good. They have made their choice, we cannot say without realizing that they have made it, but without fully understanding that no man can serve two masters; they vainly try to deceive themselves into thinking that there is somehow a compatibility between light and darkness, that they can live their lives in a

sort of grey twilight neither giving themselves wholly to good nor to evil.

This spiritual confusion, which is so fearfully common, is doubtless one of the deceptions of Satan, who knows that even our sinful nature would dread and fear and recoil from the depths of evil should he be so unwise as to show them to us all at once. So he lures us on through this false twilight, which so many mistake for dawn, and uses to our further hurt the very warnings which from time to time are given us by the mercy of God. "You are not so bad, after all," he tells us, "you go to church with fair regularity, you do good works—never mind about the motives—you have no intention of breaking away from God and goodness, you do not want to die in your sin and go to hell—oh, you might be worse than you are, and, after all, experience has shown you that it is useless for you to try to be better." Do not the words sound familiar? Can we not dimly understand why Judas, vice-ridden as he was, with character undermined, his sense of loyalty and decency almost gone, yet continued with his Master, even to the Cenacle—even when the price of blood was in

the bag from which every penny of the common funds had been abstracted.

For, remember this, at any one of the many warnings, right up to the moment when the deed was done, Judas might have repented. Grace after grace was given to him, opportunity knocked at his door, not once, but many times. Yet because his will was wrong, persistently wrong, he went on—on to the perfidy of the Temple Court, the hypocrisy of the Cenacle, the treachery of Gethsemane, the remorse (not penitence) of the House of Caiphas, and the strangled corpse of the Valley of Hinnom—on "to his own place."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MORSEL

We come, then, to the scene in the Cenacle —our Lord surrounded by the Twelve, eating with them the Paschal Supper, instituting the Blessed Sacrament, giving to those whom He had chosen as His Apostles the highest pledge of friendship, the closest communion with Himself, at once the promise and the fulfillment of their utter and complete union with Him, Who was about to give His life for them and for all the world. Judas is there, at the table, near to the Lord, whom he has already sold to His enemies for a paltry sum. We would be amazed at this did we not realize that even at this last moment the Master has permitted the faithless Apostle to come close to Himself in order to give him one last chance to repent and be saved. What love, what tenderness, even more marked than His evident sorrow, is in that effort of Christ to reclaim Judas from the brink of the precipice down

which he is determined to hurl himself! What poignancy is in the cry of Jesus, "the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table!" (Luke 22: 21.) After nearly fifty years the Beloved Disciple could not write, in his Gospel, of the Last Supper without joyful emotion, tinged only by the shame of that incident of the final rejection by Judas of his last opportunity. St. John records how again and again Jesus referred to Judas in His discourse (John 13: 18, 17: 12), and how He sent Judas away from the table into the night when even His divine long-suffering could endure his presence no longer (John 13: 21–30).

Permit me to call your attention to but two elements of that final parting of Master and Disciple, for such, indeed, it was. Judas had scorned his last opportunity, rejected his last grace. Henceforth he is to find no place for repentance, nor will he seek it with tears. And because of this, because his heart is wholly hardened, his will entirely alienated from the Divine Will, our Lord will not turn and look at him, as He will upon Peter, though Judas hovers around the scenes of the Passion to see what the end will be, and to find in that end

nothing but dead despair and impenitent remorse.

There is a question among Catholic commentators as to whether or not Judas was present when our Lord instituted the Eucharist and so received Holy Communion. The question has never been authoritatively decided, so we may be permitted to think that he did commit that crowning sacrilege and receive the Sacrament, at Its very first celebration, in a state of mortal sin. And would it not be quite in keeping with the little we know of the character and psychology of Judas for him to do such a thing as this? Here was a man, the archetype of that strange, yet not uncommon, mixture of vicious inclinations yielded to, with some sort of an interest in religion and religious persons or things.

It is one of the profound mysteries of human character and personality, but is it not a fact, that often and often we find men and women clinging at least to the outward forms of religion, cultivating the acquaintance of some religious person, a priest or a nun, and yet living in sin. It would seem that this incongruity is not altogether the result of hypoc-

risy, but a sort of desperate clinging to some vestige of decency and goodness. And sometimes it is just this very reluctance to cast away every remnant of goodness that is the means of bringing salvation to such souls. It may be nothing more than habit that brings a man to church Sunday after Sunday, when his whole life reeks with iniquity; yet that very habit may be his hope before the end. It may be some almost subconscious struggle after goodness which makes a woman keep up her girlhood's friendship with some Sister, even when she knows herself to be unfit for companionship with such a cloistered soul; yet some day, before it is too late, God may give to His consecrated bride a word to say to His wandering one which will be the means of bringing her back. Do not be too quick to judge such a one—to say "hypocrite" when it may not be hypocrisy at all.

But for Judas Iscariot it is hard to find any such palliation. At first it might have been his excuse. Now, as the end draws near, it is his shame. Even his sin-deadened sensibilities could not endure the mild, yet searching, eyes of Him who was to become, in one short hour, the victim of his treachery. He can no longer

brazen it out. He knows that Jesus knows his guilt. To the rest of the Apostles the Master gives no heed as they shamefacedly inquire "Lord, is it I?" but at the question of St. John, lying there upon His breast close to His Sacred Heart, the very antithesis of all that Judas had become, the identification is made (John 13 : 25, 26). Iscariot receives the morsel, which Orientalists tell us was a part of the ceremonies of the Paschal Supper, and was given by the Master of the Feast to the youngest present or to some specially honored guest. "He therefore having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night." The Betrayer had betrayed himself. Instead of flinging himself at the feet of Jesus and declaring his guilt, instead of praying for forgiveness from that loving Lord whom he had so deeply injured, he gathers his purse into the folds of his garment and goes out, to sneak through the shadows to the soldiers waiting for him to guide them to Gethsemane.

We wonder that Judas was not afraid—afraid as he sits there at the table with the mournful eyes of Jesus fixed upon him, reading his inmost thoughts—afraid when his guilt is made known to Peter and John—afraid as

he hurries through the moonlit streets to join the soldiers—afraid as he afterwards undoubtedly was when he saw the result of his perfidy. It was the awful boldness of sin which gave Judas courage to consummate his wickedness. It was the stubbornness of his warped and misdirected will which enabled him to carry through that evil which he had begun.

Is there no lesson for us in this?

Another thing that you have perhaps noticed with surprise in reading the accounts of the Last Supper, is the fact that when our Lord told the Apostles that one of them should betray Him, they *all* began to ask Him, "Lord, is it I?" (Matt. 26: 21, 22.) Could it be that even St. Peter and St. John, even St. Bartholomew, in whom there was no guile, had any doubt as to their own integrity? Did they believe themselves to be capable of this ultimate baseness? Perhaps. They were but men, weak men, upon whom the Paraclete had not yet come. Within a few hours they should all forsake Him and flee. Surely they loved their Lord, certainly they were devoted to Him heart and soul; yet they were men, and each knew his weakness, and though none of them could imagine himself doing such a thing,

yet each of them feared for himself. They were not presumptuous men; the one of them who came nearest to that fell more completely than the others. So they looked one upon the other with wonder and surprise and each of them asked, though the asking tore his heart, "Lord, is it I?"

Perhaps Judas asked that question too, in a spirit of bravado. But the others asked it honestly, facing their weakness, praying to be delivered from it. It is a question which every disciple of Jesus Christ ought to ask himself often and often. It is, indeed, the basis of every self-examination, and the answer to it is found in every good confession that we make. Before we dare approach that divine and awful Sacrament, which our Lord instituted in the night in which He was betrayed, in the night on which He suffered, every Catholic must ask himself in all sincerity, "Lord, is it I?" He must face his weakness, he must know his sin and confess it, else he dare not draw near that Holy Table.

And, like the Apostles in the Cenacle, he must realize that his weakness is inherent; hard though it be to face the fact, he must face it—that there is in him the possibility of every evil thing, even the sin of Judas, unless the Lord

whom he loves and serves come speedily to his aid. "Without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15: 5). It was their knowledge of this truth which made the Apostles afraid of themselves, fearful of trusting their own strength. It is the realization of this truth which will give to the weakest disciple access to the strength to do all things through Christ, Who strengtheneth him. (Phil. 4: 13.)

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CRIME

After all, I suppose that what bulks larger in our minds than the fact that Judas sold his Master is the manner in which he went about the actual betrayal. Here the hypocrisy of the man comes again to the fore, without any possibility of excuse or extenuation. As in the House of Simon the Leper, as in the Cenacle, so in Gethsemane, he simply cannot be decent and honorable even with that honor which is proverbial among thieves. Why could he not have said: "This ointment might have been sold for three hundred pence and the proceeds given to us"—why could he not at least have had the decency to stay away from the Last Supper—why could he not have led the soldiers to the Garden and pointed out the Master by a wave of his hand? But no; "He that betrayed Him had given them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He, hold him fast. And forth-

with coming to Jesus, he said: Hail, Rabbi. And he kissed Him" (Matt. 26: 48, 49).

Where now is our abhorrence of the avarice of Judas—gone, forgotten, swallowed up in our indignation at the hypocrisy of the wretch, who could dare to make the mark of intimate and holy friendship the sign of betrayal.

But of this presently. It is for us now to try to realize that it was the yielding to one beastly vice that made this complete moral collapse possible. There seems no *nexus* between the two—an inordinate love for money, and this ultimate perfidy. Yet the relation is that of cause and effect; the process is imaginable, and it is the process of gradual weakening of the whole moral and spiritual fiber through constant yielding to one besetting temptation.

I have said that with avarice, in the case of Judas, came the petty vices of furtiveness and hypocrisy. We may think of Judas first desiring money, then stealing a coin now and then, and growing more and more stealthy—did you ever think of that word "stealthy" as primarily descriptive of the manner of one who steals? But furtiveness is not enough to cover what is so vivid to the mind of the thief. "The

wicked fleeth, when no man pursueth" (Prov. 28: 1), and the thief thinks men are watching him when really nobody knows that he is a thief. So he adds to his furtiveness the hypocrisy which he thinks will be an effective blind to his own activities. There is always something to be profoundly suspected about the man who inveighs against some particular vice —one may be permitted to guess that he himself has something to hide! His philippics may be the exhibitions of righteous indignation, but they are rather apt to be nothing more than the dust which he thinks it wise to throw into eyes which might otherwise scan his own actions too narrowly.

The worst of it is that these vices, large and small, primary and accompanying, grow upon a man till they become part of his character— till he simply cannot do anything honestly or decently even when it would be more to his advantage to act in a straight-forward and open way. Judgment becomes distorted, the devious way is the only way that seems possible. Judas might have accomplished his purpose in a number of manners—only one method occurred to him, the hypocritical, craven way that has left the world speechless in execration at the mere

mention of his name. That he should use the sign of friendship in this untoward manner is quite in keeping with his misuse of every one of his privileges from the moment when he accepted the call of Christ there in Kerioth. From first to last he "used" the Master, the Apostolic band, his position among them, the Apostolic purse, for his own aggrandizement, his own advantage. And this he did along the lines of his vice, which was avarice. But this "using" of people and things for selfish ends is characteristic of any sin, for sin is selfishness, sin is the forgetfulness of the rights of others, the rights of God first of all, and the rights of our fellow men, and so on down to the rights (if one may speak so) of even the inanimate objects which the sinner turns from their due and lawful use to make them minister to his depravity. Even worldlings resent this, and rightly. In the pregnant phrase of the day, which makes up in forcefulness what it lacks in elegance, no one likes to be used for a good thing. It is bad enough when one's enemies do this, but a thousand times worse when those whom we think our friends are discovered to be mere sycophants and opportunists, making capital of their connection with us to further

their own selfish ends. Friendship was never ordained for such uses, and the test of friendship, as of all human relationships, is whether or not it is unselfish. If our love is self-seeking it is not love at all, for self-love is not worthy the name which it degrades and disgraces. Our human affections were given us first that we might give them back to God, and then, having received the divine blessing, bestow them measurably, nobly, and unselfishly upon worthy persons and objects in this life. So important is this matter of the directing of our human loves that God Himself has given us rules and regulations for their government, has set them their bounds which they may not pass without sin.

The friendship of our Blessed Lord with His Apostles was, on the merely human side, singularly close and beautiful. To them He opened the treasures of His Human Heart. One of them has gone down through the ages bearing the title "The Disciple whom Jesus loved." To all of them He confided the innermost truths of the religion which He came upon earth to establish; to them it was given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, and this not only in their capacity as His

chosen witnesses, but in the personal confidence which He gave to those whom He called not servants, but friends (John 15:15). There was, in the days of His flesh, before He was glorified, little or nothing of that awe and solemnity which after the Resurrection characterized their relations to their Lord. Indeed it is evident that during the first part, at least, of the earthly ministry of Jesus His disciples had no idea that He was God; that great and overwhelming truth came to them slowly and grew but gradually, and was not fully understood even when St. Peter made his confession of the divinity which had not been revealed to him by flesh and blood (Matt. 24:52). Rather we are constrained by the very simplicity of the Gospel narratives to think of them as going about with Jesus in the capacity of companions, disciples, friends, rather than as Apostles, until the time came for Him to reveal to them His divinity, and their great vocation as His official witnesses and representatives.

It was this sacred intimacy, this transcendent human friendship, which Judas abused and traduced. Obviously he did not believe that Jesus was God. In spite of all that he had

heard and seen, in spite of the teachings, the miracles, the confession of St. Peter accepted and approved, the evident claims of Christ, Judas did not believe. How could he have believed that Jesus was God, and yet dared to come to Him in the privacy of the Garden, with a band of soldiers, knowing that the Sanhedrin would put Him to death. It was not, then, an act of blasphemy, that kiss of Judas. Its stark horror cannot claim even that sorry dignity. It was just downright human ingratitude, human treachery, human wickedness. At that it was bad enough. Judas himself, when he saw what he had done, seems to have had no consciousness that he was a deicide. "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood" (Matt. 27: 4); that was all he said when he flung the thirty silver bits before the High Priest. And I think that it is at this base traducing of that most noble of human ties, intimate friendship between man and man, that the world recoils when the name of Judas is mentioned. That—and the way he did it—using the sign of the lover to do the work of hatred.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DEATH OF JUDAS

It would seem that with the actual apprehension of our Lord and during the progress of His trial, it was borne in upon the mind of Judas that he had made a great and irretrievable mistake. That he was filled suddenly with remorse is evident. That that remorse had in it any of the saving elements of penitence is doubtful. He was certainly ashamed of himself, though from what motive we may not say. He was disgusted with his vice, so that the thirty pieces of silver which had seemed so desirable before, meant nothing to him now; he was quite willing to give them back to the Sanhedrin, and cared nothing as to what became of them, for when they refused to receive them, as being indeed "the price of blood," Judas flung them down in their midst. But Judas shows none of those emotions, none of those acts of will, which betoken belated and broken-hearted

love. It is still of himself, and only of himself, that he is thinking as he cries: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood" (Matt. 27: 3–10). For mere acknowledgment of guilt is not penitence; confession alone, without at least loving attrition, will not save the sinner. And the admission by Judas of the fact of his sin, his recognition that the betrayal was a sin, do not necessarily indicate anything resembling that perfect act of contrition which alone could have saved him. That this was so his action proved. He did not go out, as did Peter, and weep bitterly—he went and hanged himself. Not contrition, but remorse and despair were the undertone of Judas' confession.

St. Peter adds the distressing details of the suicide (Acts 1: 18, 19). It is a gruesome picture from which we turn away in horror, but more ghastly still is the epitome of a soul's tragedy which the Apostle adds, "He indeed was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry—this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas hath by transgression fallen, that he might go to his own place" (Acts 1: 17 and 25). What a contrast to the triumphant exit of the other Apostles from their life of labor for the Lord, who sent them forth as chosen

witnesses to His own divine mission. They are exalted to the altars of the Church, "their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the whole world" (Rom. 10:18. Psl. 18:5), they are enshrined in the hearts of believers as the first heroes of the Faith, they are invoked by millions, they shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of the true Israel of God (Matt. 19:28). But Judas, by his own acts, forfeited all this, his name became an execration and an hissing, a bye-word for all that is base and unmanly, a synonym for everything underhanded and treacherous. "They met the tyrant's brandished steel, the lion's gory main," and thousands from that day to this have counted it the highest honor to "follow in their train." He died miserably, unrepentant, by his own hand, and the worst thing that can be said of a man, from that day to this, is to call him a Judas.

We have seen the root and the growth of the evil in his life which brought forth at last the awful fruit of his self-inflicted death. Of Judas, assuredly, are written the saddest words of all— "It might have been." Called to be a saint and an Apostle, he failed to correspond with his vocation and with the

graces given him to live up to it. The lesson is plain. To none of the Apostles, none of the saints of God down through the ages, were any more graces given than may be ours if we but ask for them. Each of us in his own vocation and calling is given sufficient grace to save his soul, to do the work which God wills him to do. But none will progress towards sanctity, or usefulness, or success in spiritual things (which is the only success that really matters) without conscious, willing coöperation with the graces offered. And failing that coöperation, we lay ourselves open to just such a fall as that of Judas. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, compassed about with every infirmity, staggering under tremendous responsibilities, undergoing terrible sufferings and unremitting persecutions, fightings without and fears within, exclaimed: "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4: 13). The weakest disciple can say the same with equal joy once he has learned the truth of Christ's words, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15: 5). In Judas' case, as in the case of every sinner, it was the desire for self-enjoyment which led to a more complete selfishness of character, and that in turn to a sense of self-sufficiency

—and that, in the end, to self-destruction. For the way of sin is always the way to suicide, moral and spiritual if not physical.

It would not be too narrow a statement to say that men and women in their right minds and in a state of grace do not kill themselves. We never hear of anyone dying by his own hand as the result of a great joy; nor does unmitigated sorrow bring self-inflicted death, unless there is in it an element of remorse and despair, that lack of faith which made it impossible for Judas to see how even his abominable sin might have been turned to the glory and praise of God had he only given the example of penitence, as did Peter. Our charity cannot, without injustice, extend to Judas, the suicide, as it goes out to so many of our fellows who destroy themselves and for whom we make the excuse that they were not of sound mind. For it was the vice of Judas which brought him to the state of despair which could find no other issue than Haceldama. And, after all, when a man's lifelong viciousness has at last unseated his reason, he is, in a way, responsible for the condition to which he has brought himself by his own repeated acts of will. Someone has said that "every man of forty is responsible for his

face," and certainly every man of mature age is responsible for his character. We cannot, as Christians and as Catholics, admit any blind determinism of heredity or environment which forces a man into a continually evil course against his will. And we know, as Christians and as Catholics, that to every man, be his circumstances ever so adverse, be his struggle against the evil tendencies of his nature ever so hard, God gives even more grace than he needs to tide him over and bring him safely through. And if he does fall—there is always the way of escape and reinstatement by penance. There is only one sin which God cannot forgive, and that is despair. For despair limits either the omnipotence or the mercy of God and so places a bar to the exercise of grace. The man who presumes to say "God *can* not forgive my sin" or "God *will* not forgive my sin," shuts himself off from the power of God and the grace of God, and either of these thoughts, or both, must have been in the mind of Judas as he knotted the halter.

We dare not speculate as to the meaning of those words of St. Peter, "his own place." But whatever they mean, that place was not the place to which his Lord had called him, the

place of honor and service and blessedness as one of His apostolic Saints. From that Judas had cut himself off, knowingly, voluntarily, finally, by his own repeated acts of sinful choice of that which he knew was evil. Whatever that place was, it was what he deserved, what he apportioned to himself. He had had his own evil way all his life, he had followed his own vicious and passionate will to the end, and at the end he came to "his own place."

I have called the first part of this book "A Study of Possibilities," and I have tried to keep this in mind in the narration of the story of Judas and the analysis of its various aspects and events. Though I have seldom pointed the moral, I think the personal application must have been evident to any reader who followed the meditations with a purpose of deriving spiritual benefit therefrom. It is a dreadful story, a sordid story. Nor is it easy to apply it to oneself, to say, with the picture of that mangled corpse before one in the gutters of the Vale of Hinnom: "There, but for the grace of God, lie I." Yet there would be no point at all to such a study did each one of us fail to realize that potentially he is Judas. Not actually, please God—anything rather than that—but

potentially, we must admit it, we must realize it, if we are to avoid becoming that which we loathe and from which we abhor.

Somewhere, in some novel so ephemeral that I have even forgotten its name, I once read the words: "There is a Judas in each one of us, waiting to betray the Son of Man with a kiss." It is the realizing of such a possibility in each one of us, humiliating and revolting as that realization must be, that will, by God's grace, save us from becoming what Judas was; which will set us, by God's grace, in the way of becoming what he might have been.

Part Two

ST. JUDE:

A STUDY OF CONTRASTS

CHAPTER ONE

HIS CALL

Superficially and up to a certain point the story of each of the Apostles is much the same as that of all the others. As we have seen, there are a few of whose call to the Apostleship some details are given, but most of the names appear for the first time in the list of the Apostolic College given in the Gospels. Such a one was St. Jude, so called by English speaking peoples because of their dislike for the name of the traitor, which he also bore, being Judas Jacobi, or brother of Jacob (James). Of this great Saint, whose popularity as a patron seems by way of being revived in these modern days of ours, we know very little with any degree of certainty. It is probable that he was the brother of St. James the Less, and therefore the son of Alpheus, though some Catholic commentators regard him as the brother of St. James Thaddeus. He is spoken

of as one of "the brethren of the Lord" by which is meant a near relative, cousin, not, of course, own brother or even half-brother, as some non-Catholic writers misrepresent the phrase. Nothing is known with certainty of his life up to the time of his call to the Apostleship. In the Gospel story he is hardly mentioned. Tradition is confused regarding his work after the Day of Pentecost, and his martyrdom. For a long time the authenticity of the Epistle which bears his name was disputed even by Catholic scholars, though it is now accepted as his work.

The Breviary tells us that St. Jude preached the Gospel in Mesopotamia, afterwards joining St. Simon in Persia, where the two Apostles reaped an innumerable harvest of souls for the Faith, and that they underwent the death of martyrdom together. That is all. Their festivals are celebrated together on the twenty-eighth of October, and we shall have something more to say about their companionship in another chapter. It may be thought that this is a very slender basis of historic fact upon which to write even a little book about this Apostle. Yet how much, by implication, lies in those simple words. He was a chosen Apostle of

Jesus Christ; upon him came the Holy Ghost at Pentecost; afterwards he labored for the conversion of the heathen in such and such countries; finally he gave up his life a martyr for his Lord. That, after all, is the story of any Apostle (except that the last clause must be omitted in the case of St. John). We have more of St. Jude in the New Testament, for his own words are brought to us in the brief Epistle which bears his name. And this is more than we have regarding, for example, St. Simon his companion or St. Bartholomew, or St. Philip.

But all of the Apostles have great lessons to teach us, by example, if not by word, and St. Jude would help us by both. Our interest in him in this little book, however, is as a contrast to his namesake, Judas the traitor, and in that light we shall reverently study his life and works, permitting our pious and reverent imagination to supply the gaps in the sacred biography, as we did in the former case, and seeking to draw out the lessons of a life that was faithful unto the end, and which must have been the direct opposite of that of Judas. We have seen how that one was recreant to the call which Christ honored him by giving; how he

fell little by little into serious sin, which resulted in his downfall; how he failed to use the opportunities that were his in such overflowing measure; in a word, how he missed the mark and became, instead of a great Saint which he might have been, the execrated Betrayer of his Lord and Master. St. Jude, on the other hand, was faithful to the Vocation given him; day by day, in companionship with Christ, he increased in virtue; instead of a downward course in his life, there is always an upward progress, because he improved every opportunity. Hardly was the mangled body of Judas laid in the dishonored grave in the Potter's Field when Jude, filled with the Holy Ghost outpoured on the Day of Pentecost, was entering into his work of evangelizing the world, taking his journey to distant lands to preach Christ and Him crucified, to die at last for the Faith he propagated, to go down to history as Apostle and Saint, and become an object of special devotion and veneration thousands of years afterwards, in our own time.

Could contrast be greater? And yet, as I have tried to indicate, there is much in common in the story of these two (as of all the Apostles) up to a certain point, and superficially. They

all were called by Christ, for that is the *sine qua non* of Apostleship. They all were faithful, except that one whose sad story has been told in the first part of this book. They all "walked with Jesus," they all sat at His feet and heard his words, they were all witnesses to his miracles. But at the Cenacle there is a sharp line of division between the Eleven and Judas. That one went out into the night, and before his Lord began to carry His Cross, he was dead by his own hand. The others saw the Crucifixion. Though they all forsook Him and fled, every one of them came back. But Judas could not come back. He had already made that Cross of none effect so far as he was concerned. The others were witnesses of the Resurrection, upon them came the Holy Ghost, after their Novena in the Cenacle. They went out into the world to spread the Glad Tidings. The others (with the exception of St. John) died violent deaths, but glorious because the crown of martyrdom hovered above their heads as they went forth to meet the lion's gory main, the tyrant's brandished sword, the stake or the cross.

Of those days and years when they all walked together with their dear Lord there is this to be said. All were called, and in that

call their Apostleship inhered. "He called unto Him His disciples; and He chose twelve of them (whom also He named Apostles)" (Luke 6: 13). And at the end of the list of the Twelve Apostles, which follows this verse, appear together "Jude, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor." (*Ibid.,* 16.) I have called the first part of this book "A Study of Possibilities." This second part might well be called "A Study of Contrasts." And the very first contrast is indicated in this scriptural pairing of the names of these two Apostles, chosen by Christ, Judas and Jude. I would have you notice this: they both, as also the others mentioned in this list, began to be Apostles as soon as the Lord chose them. "And when day was come, He called unto Him His disciples; and He chose twelve of them (whom also He named Apostles)"; then follows the list (Luke 6: 13). To them He gave the great commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16: 15). That was long afterwards, when Christ was risen from the dead, when He had made them bishops of the Holy Catholic Church which He had founded. To this end they were called and

chosen, trained and educated by Christ Himself, tried and tested. But they were called Apostles from the first, though only afterwards did they exercise their apostolate. The Twelve are often referred to as "the Apostolic College," using the phrase in its older sense, a gathering or calling together of a group of men. But during the three years they were the companions of Christ, sitting at His feet, hearing His words of instruction, being trained for their great task of evangelizing the world, they were literally a "college" in our modern sense of the word. For they were learning, day by day, the lessons Christ would teach them, and the mastery of that curriculum was no easy task.

Holy Scripture leaves us in no doubt that at first the Apostles did not understand the tremendous honor that had been done them by the Master who called them. Christ revealed the fact that He was God only gradually to His followers. At first He seemed to those who saw and heard Him but another of the prophets, a great teacher, a wonder-worker. His claims to anything more than this were met with resentment and incredulity. "Neither did His brethren believe on Him" (John 7: 5).

At the very beginning of His public ministry, when He preached His first sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth, coming from His forty days' retreat and temptation in the wilderness, though "they wondered at the words of grace that proceeded from His mouth" (Luke 4:22), yet they said: "Is not this the son of Joseph" and "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joseph, and Jude, and Simon? . . . And they were scandalized in regard of Him" (Mark 6:3). So they hustled Him out of the synagogue—an action which practically meant excommunication—and thrust Him out of the city, and would have hurled Him from the cliff to kill Him, had He not by a miracle evaded them, because His hour was not yet come.

Later on, when His fame had gone throughout the land, to such an extent that a congregation of five thousand men, not counting women and children could go out into the wilderness by the shores of the Lake of Galilee to hear Him preach, they were so nonplussed by His teaching about the Blessed Sacrament that "many of His disciples went back; and walked no more with Him" (John 6:67). "And they

said: "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith He, I came down from heaven?" (*ibid.*, 42). The miracles and the teaching of Christ were predicated on the fact that He was God. There can be no question but that from first to last He claimed to be the Only-begotten Son of the Father. What wonder that those who knew Him as man, were slow to grasp such a marvellous mystery! There came a day, not long after the defection of the disciples just mentioned, when Christ elicited from St. Peter, as prince of the Apostles, a confession of faith in His divinity. "Whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Matthew 16: 15 and 16.) Yet, strangely enough, as it seems to us, He straightway "commanded His disciples, that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ" (*ibid.*, 20).

But slowly the conviction grew in their minds. Little by little they grasped, as far as mere human intelligence could, the stupendous truth that He whom they loved and followed, He whom they called Master, was more than man. Yet even at the Last Supper, when this matter came up for discussion, it was necessary

for Christ to rebuke St. Philip, with all kindness, for his failure to understand more fully the lesson which for three years He had sought to inculcate. "Have I been so long a time with you; and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father also," and the rest (read St. John 14: 8 to 12). The Crucifixion was the supreme test of their faith, and they all failed. They all forsook Him and fled. (Matthew 26: 56.) St. John alone stood by the Cross with the Blessed Mother, and it is in His Gospel that we find the theology of the Divinity of Christ, the Incarnate Word, worked out most thoroughly. Judas, of course, was already dead by his own hand. And even after the Resurrection it was necessary for Him to upbraid them for their incredulity because they could not bring themselves to believe that He was really alive again, and therefore God. (Mark 16: 14.)

Yet all of them; except Judas, were progressing in their knowledge of Jesus, the faith of all of them, though it wavered at times and was not complete until the gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost made it possible for them to give entire and whole-hearted assent to the great fact of the Incarnation, was growing

more and more sure, so that at the last it needed but the interior enlightenment of the Spirit to make it so firm that even death could not take it away from them. How different was the case of Judas! He never believed. Christ said that he was a devil, yet he lacked even the faith that makes the demons tremble (James 2:9), with the very same opportunities to know Christ, witnessing the same miracles, hearing the same sublime teachings from the lips that spake as never man spake (John 7:46) eleven of them experienced a growing conviction that He was more than man, while the twelfth was so blinded by his own selfishness and sin that we may well believe that not for one moment did he catch even a glimpse of the glorious vision which led the others on to perfect confidence in their Divine Lord.

It is difficult for us to envisage the possibility of a faithless Apostle; did we not have the awful example of Judas to show us that such was an actual fact, we could not believe it. Rather our thought of an Apostle is such a one as St. Jude, following the Master at first out of the sheer attraction of His human personality, learning to love and revere Him as man, and gradually, but surely, being brought

to the irresistible conclusion that He was God. At the end of St. Matthew's Gospel it is recorded that "the eleven went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And seeing Him they adored: but some doubted." (Matthew 28: 16, 17.) Surely not the Apostles, for immediately Christ gave to them their great and final commission, "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them—and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world)" (*ibid.*, 19, 20). Jude was there, to receive this plenitude of the Apostolic office, this completion of the ordination which the Great High Priest Himself conferred upon those whom He had chosen to be His priests, His bishops, to carry on His work in this world when He should return to His throne of glory in Heaven. Judas might have been there. He, too, had been called and chosen, with a real vocation, had even "obtained part of this ministry" (Acts 1: 17).

What a contrast, Judas and Jude, the faithless and the faithful Apostle! What a lesson for us, for, as we have seen, ours is the opportunity, not of apostleship in the same sense as theirs, but of being of their glorious company

in the Faith. To us, in a very real sense, the Lord Christ says, "Come, follow Me!" And there begins the journey of Faith. As children we learn its rudiments, little by little our holy mother the Church leads us on to fuller and more complete understanding of our religion. Again and again we experience its practical efforts in our lives. We ought to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3: 18). For we are Christians, Catholics, from the very beginning of our life, from the Font of Baptism, called to know and love and serve God, destined to be happy with Him forever in Heaven. But if our Faith does not grow with our age, if our love does not increase with our knowledge, we have reason to fear that sin may creep in, by little and little, and make of us Judases instead of Judes.

CHAPTER TWO

HIS VIRTUES

As we studied in the case of Judas his vice, we may well, in the case of St. Jude, edify ourselves by the consideration of his virtues. And we may reasonably suppose, in the absence of positive information, that these were the virtues which distinguished all of the faithful Apostles. One of them, that faithfulness which grew in grace and knowledge and bore fruit in the deathless Faith which was crowned with martyrdom, we have already indicated. Certainly we may assert that the virtues of St. Jude were the opposite of the vices of Judas. But we have data upon which to base our estimate of the character of the Saint, for he has left us, in his Epistle, the fruit of a long life of faithful service of the Master. It would seem that St. Jude outlived all the other Apostles except St. John, and, of course, St.

Simon, his companion in martyrdom.[1] He had borne the burden of the day and its heats in the vineyard of Christ, reaping a great multitude of souls for the Faith. Surely, we may deduce from his own words what manner of man he was. But first, some few thoughts as to the character of all the faithful Apostles, in contrast to that of the one unfaithful one, will not be out of place

All of the Apostles were men of ordinary ability and limited attainments. They were just ordinary men, none of them scholars, none of them what we would call gentlemen, but men of the common people, working-men. SS. Peter and Andrew, James and John, were fishermen, St. Matthew was a tax collector, this much is known from Holy Scripture. Of the occupations of the others previous to their calling by our Lord we have no certain knowledge, and traditions vary. St. James the Greater was known for his austerity, St. Philip for his studiousness, and we have ventured to represent Judas as a small tradesman of the village of Kerioth. But, whatever their trades, occupations or business, they were all alike in this,

[1] See note at the head of the Catholic Epistle of St. Jude the Apostle, in the Douay Bible.

that they immediately forsook whatever they were doing and left all at the invitation, or rather the command of the Saviour to follow Him. And this bespeaks for all of them, with the possible exception of Judas, a very real and deep interest in spiritual matters, for it was definitely as a religious teacher that Christ appealed to them. That other motives were mixed in their readiness to accept the vocation offered to them, we need not concern ourselves to deny. James and John were clearly ambitious for honor, as we may learn from the Gospel narrative which tells us how their mother approached our Lord asking that her two sons might sit on thrones, the one on His right hand, the other on His left, in His Kingdom (Matthew 20:21). On another occasion, "Peter answering, said to Him: Behold we have left all things, and have followed Thee: what therefore shall we have?" (Matthew 19:27.) It was inevitable that the Apostles, not fully comprehending the nature of the Kingdom which Christ was to establish, should look for some temporal advantage through their following of Him. The very fact that so great a Prophet and Teacher had chosen them to be His closest companions and friends, gave

them no little prestige. After all, they were men, and had not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost to super-naturalize their characters and motives.

St. Jude, as a near relative according to the flesh of our Blessed Lord, may quite possibly have been a carpenter, since such trades are likely to run in family groups. We do not know, but we may be sure, that when the call came to him, he readily responded, and thereafter the friendship, which he had doubtless enjoyed with Jesus since they were boys together, grew into that unswerving loyalty and devotion which, when there was added to it the faith that Christ was God, made of him a valiant soldier of the faith. There must have been a fine and exalted enthusiasm about all these men, chosen by Christ to be His witnesses and heralds to the world. Merely on the human side they must have displayed qualities of mind and heart which the piercing eye of the omniscient Christ discerned and which He determined to make use of. They were called upon to undergo not a few hardships in their following of Christ, even during His earthly ministry. And after the Ascension, when they scattered throughout the world to fulfill His

command to preach the Gospel, their lives were a living martyrdom. What it meant to be an Apostle, a preacher of Christ, a bishop of the Catholic Church, in those primitive days and years of the infant Church, we are not left to conjecture, for we have the detailed story of one such in the history of St. Paul given in the Acts of the Apostles. The very fact that all, except St. John, died martyrs, gives us some inkling of what their lives must have been. And even St. John really underwent martyrdom, though saved from its fatal issue by a miracle before the Latin Gate. Of the long years of exile in his old age, who can estimate the hardships? But these men, all of them, were inured to privations, and bore them gladly and willingly for the sake of Him who had suffered more than all.

Humility was an outstanding characteristic of all the Apostles, Judas always excepted. Remember, to them at first Christ could have seemed only a man like themselves. Some of them at least had a little education, and Jesus was supposed to have none. "How doth this man know letters, having never learned?" asked the Jews when Christ began to preach (John 7:15). The Lord came from the

despised village of Nazareth. "Can any good come from Nazareth (John 1:46) was a saying of the time, echoed by St. Nathanael when St. Philip called him to come and be presented to Jesus. It certainly required some degree of humility for these men to sit at the feet of Jesus and be taught by Him. Yet so well did they learn the lesson of that most kingly of virtues that St. Paul could say of them, "For I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake . . . we are weak . . . we [are] without honor . . . we are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even until now" (1 Corinthians 4: 9 to 13). Even so had their Lord warned them it would be. "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord" (Luke 6:40). He gave them to understand that as He was despised and rejected of men, so should they also be; as He was calumniated and persecuted, they might expect no better treatment; as He laid down His life for the Truth, so must they be martyrs to His cause.

Yet they were steadfast. True, at the time

of the crucifixion they all left him and fled for fear of their own lives. St. Peter, under the stress of that overwhelming disappointment and dread, even denied that he knew the man who was being led away to death. But for that one moment of weakness they all paid with their lives, and not only during the three years of companioning with their Lord, but through all the long years after He had left them, they were true to Him, even unto death. Only one of those who left Him when the dark shadows of the Passion began to close about Him did not come back. Only one of them despaired. How different the reaction of the Eleven to the terrible events of Holy week from that of Judas! He had been faithless, disloyal, a false friend, for three years: he could not be faithful now. That treachery which prompted him to rob the purse of the little band of Apostles bore its terrible fruit in the bargaining with the Sanhedrin for the thirty pieces of silver. Where the other Apostles gave up everything, he sought to make profit out of his connection with Christ. We cannot even imagine such baseness in any of the others. Rather we see them as sacrificing all that they might first

know Christ, afterwards that they might give that knowledge of Him to the world.

Even a cursory study of the Epistle of St. Jude gives us certain indications of his character. It is his faith and his fidelity that stand out in compelling clearness, as he exhorts his disciples "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). It is to the faith of his readers that he appeals throughout the one short chapter of his letter, which closes with a doxology of faith in Christ the King. It is the faithless whom he reprobates; the faithful whom he commends, admonishing them: "But you, my beloved, building yourself upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto life everlasting" (Jude 20, 21).

Because his whole mind is so instinct with faith, it is against heresy that he inveighs, more strongly, perhaps, than ony other Apostolic writer. Because his Epistle was written at a comparatively late date, he had seen how heresy had crept into the infant Church. Commentators place the date of writing of this

Epistle at some time between the years 63 and 67, with the weight of modern scholarship tending towards the later year. The heresy so strongly condemned by St. Jude (as also in the Second Epistle of St. Peter) was probably an early form of Gnosticism, and our Saint condemns in no uncertain terms those who taught such errors, both for their erroneous doctrine and for their evil lives. Gentle and benevolent as St. Jude was, nothing could exceed the rigorousness of his righteous indignation against those who would pervert the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. In this we see the Apostle's uncompromising championship of the truth, his utter faithfulness to the teachings he had heard from the lips of the Divine Master Himself.

Comentators call attention to a little turn in the salutation of the Epistle which might otherwise escape the ordinary reader. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (Jude 1:1). Thus he identifies himself. He says nothing of his blood relationship to Christ, though the Gospels speak of him as one of the "brethren of the Lord." Nor does he make use of his title of Apostle, of which St. Paul was so proud. His humility will not

permit him to set himself forward, for he has more important things to write about than himself. Because he is an humble man he can urge his readers to be humble, in contradistinction to the pride of the heretics who "despise dominion, and blaspheme majesty" (Jude 1:8). Bishop Challoner's note on this text, as given in our English Bible, shows to what lengths the pride of those early heretics went. And it is to be remembered that pride is ever the besetting sin of heretics. Intellectual pride, which thinks it knows more than the Church, and so presumes to differ from her infallible teaching; personal pride, which cannot brook any who differ from them, these are the distinguishing marks of heretics of all ages. At the bottom of all false teaching is the pride which will not humble itself before lawful authority, which sets itself up in opposition to the magisterium of the one divinely constituted teaching body, the one living voice appointed by Christ Himself. It would be interesting to trace this failing in the lives of those whose names have disfigured history as heresiarchs. All, without exception, were proud men, intolerant, unwilling to submit their opinions to the judgment of authority, headstrong—but

to give the catalogue of their characteristics would be to quote St. Jude, whose epitomization of the personal character of the heretics of his time stands good for those of all time (Jude 1: 8, 10 to 13 and 16).

If a personal reminiscence may be pardoned, I remember very well, years ago, when I was studying for the ministry of a non-Catholic body, an old clergyman remarking, "Humility is not an attribute of the Protestant saint." And in some twelve years of active ministerial work I found this to be all too true; whatever virtues adorned these good people, and they were many and of no mean order, there was always that spiritual pride, or intellectual vanity, which spoiled it all, and which, in time, I came to realize was an inevitable consequence of the Protestant doctrine of private judgment. Even in those who approached most closely to Catholic teaching this individualism persisted, and their acceptance of that truth was always conditioned by it. Yet, as they came to apprehend more and more the teachings of the Church, what humility they had was measurably increased. But it was pride which, in the last analysis, kept them out of the Church, and the hardest sacrifice the convert

has to make is the giving up of his wrong opinions, the submission of his judgment to authority. *Crede, experto!* That only comes when God in His mercy bestows the gift of faith, and the greater a man's faith, the more humble the man, any Catholic spiritual writer will tell you that, and daily experience proves it.

In spite of his fiery zeal for the faith, in spite of his scathing denunciation of the faithless, St. Jude shows a very gentle kindliness as an attribute of his character towards the end of his Epistle (Jude 1:23) in the verse in which he urges the orthodox Catholics, the keepers of the faith, not to be too hasty in considering individuals to be heretics. "Some indeed reprove," he says, "but others save, pulling them out of the fire . . . and on others have mercy." "With these," says Bishop Challoner in his note, "you must deal more gently and mildly, with a charitable compassion, hating always, and teaching others to hate the carnal garment which is spotted, their sensual and corrupt manners." Hate sin, love the sinner, even as Christ did. This is the lesson the gentle Saint would teach us. He recognizes that not all who fall into erroneous opinions do

so out of malice; many are deceived, some are in good faith and led away by the false teachers, some know the truth only in a garbled and distorted form. It is a lesson which we Catholics very much need to learn. It is difficult for us to realize the *bona fides* of our non-Catholic friends. To us the Catholic faith seems so reasonable, so self-evident, the proofs of its teachings so compelling, that those who differ from us seem to us to be a little stupid, if not actually malicious, in their failure to see it as clearly as we. It is well for us to remember the teaching of the Church with regard to invincible ignorance, well also to remind ourselves that most, if not all, of those who are hostile to the Church are so because they do not really know her, have been misinformed regarding her teaching and practice, and are, therefore, unable to appreciate her beauty. Someone has said, "If the Catholic Church were really what many non-Catholics think and believe it to be, we would hate her ourselves!" There are some, undoubtedly, whose anti-Catholic prejudice is really malicious, who make use of it as a means of gain, wilfully and intentionally misrepresenting Catholic teaching and practice, distorting his-

tory, and making no small profit by fanning the fires of bigotry. There are renegades who are the worst bigots of all. But there are multitudes of well-disposed men and women who simply do not know any better, and whose dislike of the Catholic Church is easily overcome by a calm explanation of the facts or (even more surely) by a good example of Christian living on the part of their Catholic neighbors. Surely these, though they are formal heretics in their denial of the eternal truths of the faith, do not merit the denunciation of the Apostle, but rather fall under the kindly admonition at the end of his Epistle. A greater than St. Jude prayed for those who sinned through ignorance, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Luke 23:24). The same Apostle who exhorts his followers (among whom we may number ourselves) to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," brings his admonition to a close by bidding us "on others have mercy." That is the ideal combination which ought to be found in all Catholics in their dealings with their non-Catholic neighbors—a fearless profession of the faith, a readiness to answer reasonable questions, to give explanations when asked,

linked with a gentle kindliness, a good example, and much prayer.

St. Jude, like the other Apostles, was a great convert-maker. And we are called to share his apostolate in a lesser measure. We can best do this by imitating his virtues, faithfulness, humility, steadfastness, mercy, hatred of error, but love for the erring. May his prayers obtain for us the grace to tread this none-too-easy path after him.

CHAPTER THREE

HIS OFFICE AND WORK

The Apostles were the first bishops of the Holy Catholic Church. This is a fact which should never be forgotten, but which it is somewhat hard for us to realize, so different is the work of a bishop today from that in which the Apostles engaged. Yet, not so different after all, at least in spirit, as I trust this chapter may show. We learned in our catechism that "Apostolicity" is one of the marks or notes of the true Church, which means that the Church has ever adhered to the faith of the Apostles, has ever been taught and governed by the Apostles and their lawful successors, and that these two aspects of its Apostolicity are inherent in its very nature, since the Church was founded by Christ upon the Apostles. Theologians say that the teaching and government of the Church by lawful bishops, under the supreme headship of the Pope (who is the pri-

mate of all Christendom), is of the *esse* or very being of the Church. It is also shown to be of the *bene esse,* or for the best good of the Church, for, being of divine institution, no other or superior method for the preservation of the truth and the good government of Christians could possibly be devised by man.

That this is no novel device of theologians to bolster up the claims of Catholicism, as some non-Catholics maintain, is amply shown by numerous references in the New Testament, one of which may suffice us. St. Paul speaks of the Catholic Church as being "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2: 20). That the Apostles were the first bishops is easily proven from Sacred Scripture, nor was this even questioned for the first fifteen hundred years of the history of the Catholic Church. But it has become, in our own day, the fashion in some quarters to point out the differences between those primitive bishops and their successors, ignoring the even more evident fact that in spirit, in office and, to a very large degree in work as well the bishops of the Catholic Church today are no less Apostles than were their predecessors in

ages past, even to the Twelve themselves. It is quite true that the development and spread of the Church, no less than the changing conditions of that advanced civilization which the Church has brought to the world, have added to the duties of bishops in some regards and altered them in others. All of the Apostles were missionaries, going themselves, through all the hardships of early times, to preach the Gospel throughout the then known world, in obedience to the command of their Divine Lord. But are there not missionary bishops today? Read the accounts of the lives of Prefects and Vicars Apostolic in heathen lands, China, Japan, India, Africa, even our own Alaska, and you will find oftentimes the very details of the most primitive times reënacted by men whom you and I may have the privilege of meeting.

We know that St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles and First Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, established himself successively in two sees or dioceses, first at Antioch and afterwards at Rome. We know that St. James the Less was the first bishop of Jerusalem. Tradition tells us that St. John founded the see of Ephesus and remained there for some years

as its first bishop. The other Apostles founded dioceses, but usually they consecrated bishops for them, and went on to fresh fields of missionary activity. In this they differed from our latter-day bishops, who are appointed to a certain diocese and usually remain there until death. But that the original Apostles had their part in the government, no less than in the teaching, of the Church is quite clear from the New Testament itself, to say nothing of the history of the early Church. The first work of the Apostles was the spread of the faith, leaving to others its maintenance once they had established it. Their commission was world wide, and their lives all too short for the work they had to do. Their successors likewise were not left long to rule in their stead, for persecution took its toll from the Church, and the head that wore the mitre was always the first to fall before the tyrant's steel. For centuries it was literally true that to be a bishop meant to be a martyr.

But at long last peace came to the Church, and she came forth from her subterranean hiding-places to grow apace, to flourish, to exercise that holy power which was and is her right. Almost at once her recognized leaders, teach-

ers, rulers, the bishops, assumed the position of prominence which they have ever since occupied. Sees were established everywhere, and with their establishment the bishops were more and more occupied with what might be called the routine work of the Church. Still there were missionaries, and the history of the Church through the Middle Ages is one long story of heroic prelates going forth to heathen countries to found the Church, witness to the truth, and seal their faith with their blood. What nation does not boast of its martyr and confessor bishops, whose feastdays keep the Church employed in praises to God? One and all the evangelizers of the world were members of that sacred Order, for the organization of the Church is inherently hierarchical, so that its Fathers could lay down the axiom, *"Ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia,"* where the bishop is, there is the Church. It was necessary that the bishops should go forth as missionaries, for not only were there souls to be instructed in the truths of the faith, but everywhere priests must be raised up from among their own people to care for the growing congregations. Always it has been the policy of the Church to create a native episcopate as soon as conditions

made it possible, and here is one of the most startling proofs of both the Apostolicity and the Catholicity of the true Church that every nation under heaven has its own prelates, all sharing the same dignity and power, all professing the same faith, all rendering obedience to the same head, bound together in the things of the spirit, however widely their race or color or speech might otherwise divide them.

As the Church everywhere grew and prospered, it was but natural that the bishops should become more and more the sort of officials we know today. Not strange, either, that in time they should become great feudal lords, custodians of large properties, men of affairs, advisors of the civil rulers, patrons of learning and of the arts. The history of the episcopate is a fascinating study, for it is the history of the Church. Such changes as there may have been in the superficial character of the bishops of Christendom are but indicative of the progress of the Church herself, with her marvellous power of adaptation to the needs of varying peoples and times. Yet, through it all, she has kept clearly before her children the essential office and work of her leaders, which are

no different today than they have been in the past.

A bishop is, first of all, a custodian of the faith and the official teacher thereof. That the plenitude of this Apostolic office is, so to speak, centralized and personified in the Pope, does not in the least derogate from the part the individual bishops have to play in carrying on the Apostolic tradition. For the Pope is, after all, essentially the Universal Primate of the Episcopate, the Chief Bishop of Christendom. Although even a layman might, theoretically, be elected Pope, he must always be consecrated bishop immediately, for the Pope must by divine institution be a bishop, an Apostle. Only to him is committed the supernatural protection of infallibility. But to all the bishops, singly and collectively, the teaching magisterium of the Church is committed. They are the official teachers of the Church, always subject to the Pope as their infallible head and guide. So long as they remain in communion with him, their faith is assured against error. Comparatively few bishops, in the course of ages, have lapsed from the faith, attempted to teach for truth that which was not true, or, as

we say, fallen into heresy. And they have been, either by their own acts or by the official action of the Pope, cut off from the Church and forbidden to exercise their episcopal functions. Some have gone into schism, but then their office, severed from the head of jurisdiction, has become illicit.

But it is of "our lawful pastors" that we are now thinking, of the bishop in union with the Holy See, deriving his authority therefrom, governing by delegated jurisdiction in his own diocese, teaching always in dependence upon the supreme and infallible head of the Catholic Church on earth. The commission of our Lord to St. Peter, and through him to the other Apostles, was not only to teach but to rule the Church which He founded upon them. The Church is the Kingdom of God upon earth, and a kingdom without authority and discipline would not be a kingdom at all, but anarchy. There is ample evidence in the Acts of the Apostles and in their Epistles that they exercised their authority, and that those who, even in those early days, presumed to dispute it, were thereby cut off from the communion of the faithful. Students of Scripture will remind themselves that the original Apostles were

given certain "charismatic gifts," which did not descend to their successors, but which were necessary for the peculiar work which they had to do. It is, perhaps, this fact which confuses non-Catholics and makes it difficult for them to understand that the Apostles were bishops, in the Catholic sense, and that Catholic bishops are Apostles today. As we turn now to the legend of St. Jude, it is well to bear this in mind.

As has been said in a previous chapter, there is little authentically known about the life and work of St. Jude. But there is a rich legend concerning him, which could not be passed over in a book about him, though it must not be supposed that in recounting it the present writer is making any claim to historicity. The official tradition of the Church concerning this great Saint is practically limited to the statements given in the Breviary Lesson for his feast, and in the Martyrology. From these we glean that he preached the Gospel, first in Mesopotamia, and afterwards in company with his fellow-Apostle St. Simon, in Persia. They are said to have gathered an immense harvest of souls, and to have suffered martyrdom together. And this is about all that tradition

tells us. Legend, however, has much more of interest, and it should be noted that legends of the Apostles are worthy of trust, both because of their antiquity and because the Church, while never having officially recognised them, has never condemned them or said they were not true.

The legend of St. Jude, then, runs thus: There was, in the city of Edessa, during the life of our Lord, a King named Abagaro, who had the great misfortune, like Naaman, to be a leper. Hearing of the miracles which Christ was working in the land of the Jews, he sent messengers to entreat Him to come to Edessa and cure him of his affliction. But, as Holy Scripture teaches us, Christ did not come, in the Incarnation, to the Gentiles, and so the King's request was denied, or rather the granting of it was put off and arranged in a different way. The King, however, was not daunted, but sent an artist to Jerusalem to paint a portrait of Christ, which the monarch thought might well bring healing to him, since he had heard that they were healed who so much as touched the hem of His garment (Matthew 14:36; Mark 6:56). But the artist, blinded by the glory which streamed from the

Holy Face of the Redeemer, could not draw a single line. Jesus, moved by compassion, and wishing to console Abagaro, held a cloth to His face and the portrait was imprinted thereupon, and the artist returned to the King with the promise that some one would be sent to heal him.

We need not look critically into this part of the legend, but simply note that this is why, in older statues and pictures, St. Jude is often represented as holding upon his breast a picture of our Lord. After the Ascension, St. Jude set out for Edessa, at the express command of Christ, and, having converted Abagaro to the faith, cured him of his leprosy. At once the whole kingdom embraced the faith, as was so often the story of those early times, when the conversion of the monarch meant the ingathering of his entire people to the Church. Leaving a bishop to care for the Catholics of Edessa, St. Jude during the next ten years evangelized the whole of Mesopotamia before returning to Jerusalem for the Council of the Apostles, as recounted in Acts 15. It was after this that he became the companion of St. Simon in Lybia, whence they proceeded to Persia to reap their greatest harvest of souls.

Of this period the legend is told of the opposition of the two magicians, Zaroes and Arfaxad. At the approach of the Apostles, the idols fell from their pedestals in the temples, and the magicians could no longer obtain oracles from them. On coming to the camp of the Persian army, Verardach, the commander, summoned the two Saints for a trial of skill against the magicians, who foretold a long campaign. But St. Jude promised the arrival of ambassadors to sue for peace on the very next day, and his prophesy was fulfilled. The commander ordered the magicians to be burned alive, but spared them at the intercession of the Apostles.

Another story has to do with the fulfilment of our Lord's promise to His Apostles: "They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them" (Mark 16: 18). The magicians set poisonous snakes upon the two Saints, in the presence of the King, but the snakes turned upon their trainers and attacked them, until commanded by the Apostles to cease. Whereupon St. Simon and St. Jude picked them up and held them to their bosoms without suffering any hurt. This marvel completed the conversion of

the King, and with him multitudes of his subjects. But in spite of this the time came when the hatred of the heathen priests brought about the martyrdom of the Apostles; but of this in another chapter.

Whatever may be the historical value of these legends, there is nothing improbable in them. Far more miraculous events are narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, especially about St. Paul, and these, remember, are canonical Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Ghost and vouched for by the Catholic Church. The miracles of St. Jude, as handed down to us by legend, are of the same sort. We are not bound to believe them, in the same way that we are bound to believe those recounted in the Bible, but there is no reason why we should not credit them, and piety demands that we accept them. Surely no Catholic will find any difficulty in that! I bring up this point here because outside the Catholic Church there is today little or no belief in miracles; indeed the slogan of the materialists is "miracles cannot (and therefore do not) happen." Yet the miracles set down in Holy Scripture rest on as firm testimony as any historical occurrences of ancient times, and such modern miracles as those of

Lourdes are as well attested as any so-called "scientific facts."

But it is neither the possibility of miracles in general, nor the historicity of the miracles of St. Jude in particular which concern us here. Rather let us give a moment to a consideration which grows out of what has been said regarding the office and work of the Apostles and the story of St. Jude's episcopal activities. To all this Judas also was called, in all this he might have had a share. Indeed it is set down in Holy Scripture that he did have some share in this ministry (Acts 1: 17), and from the Gospel narrative we may deduce that he even had and exercised the power of working miracles during the time when he followed our Lord. Of course, he never received the full consecration to the Episcopate which our Lord Himself conferred upon the other Apostles, for this was, according to theologians, not completed until after the Resurrection, nor exercised, indeed, until the Holy Ghost had come upon them at Pentecost. Again the contrast, Jude and Judas. Both Apostles, both bishops, at least *"in fieri"* during the earthly life of our Lord. The one goes on to sanctity, the other dies by his own hand. The one goes out to

preach the Word and gather a vast harvest of souls; the other becomes a name of shame and cannot save even his own soul, despite the opportunities he had, the grace that was given him (as St. Paul would say) in vain (see 2 Corinthians 6:1). The one works miracles, as his Lord had promised he should; the other is almost as much a miracle of evil as any man could ever be. To one the Holy Ghost was given in the plenitude of Pentecostal power; of the other the Master Himself said that he had, or was, a devil (John 6:71).

All this helps us a little to understand that most difficult of problems, scandals in the Church. I said in the forepart of this chapter that while the Pope is supernaturally protected against teaching error, and so cannot fall into heresy in his capacity as head and teacher of the Church, no such protection is guaranteed to a bishop. It is a matter of history that some bishops have fallen away from the faith, Arius of Alexandria being the classic example. The student of ecclesiastical history is neither surprised nor shocked to find that the early heresiarchs were, almost without exception, bishops who not only fell away themselves, but led away with them many of the weaker breth-

ren. Coming nearer to our own time, Luther was a priest. And, though we prefer not to say much about it, some of us know of scandals, faithlessness, sin, in those who should be our spiritual leaders and fathers. Now all this is no argument against either the Apostolicity or the holiness of the Church. If an Apostle could apostatize, need we wonder that lesser men, even with the same sacred office, fall prey to the wiles of Satan? The wonder is that there are so few, that the names of the Judases of history are so few and far between. For one recreant Apostle there are eleven faithful unto death. For one fallen leader there are innumerable bishop-saints.

But we cannot close this sad chapter without calling attention to the fact that even the heresiarchs sinned through zeal for what they thought was truth. A far more terrible scandal is that caused by sinful and unworthy clergymen, who use, as Judas did, their high place as a cloak for maliciousness (1 Peter 2:16). The charity of Catholics is wont to cover their names with the veil of silence, but the world is not so merciful. Yet, after all, whom have we to make priests and bishops but poor, weak, sinful men? The very fact that they are raised

to the sublime dignity of the priesthood lays them open to an host of temptations never realized by the layman. True, they have supernatural helps, but God never promised to keep even the Popes free from sin. "It must needs be that scandals come;" said our Blessed Lord, "but nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh" (Matthew 18:7).

Thank God, they who fall are few, compared to them who remain faithful. And may it not be that some of these sad derelictions are due to our lack of prayer? Pray for your priests, pray for your bishops, yes, pray for the Pope. It is an Apostolic precept: "Remember [that is, in prayer] your prelates, and be subject to them" (Hebrews 13:7). It is the same St. Paul who exhorts his subjects, again and again, "pray for us" (I Thessalonians 5:25; 3:1; Hebrews 13:18). Who knows what such loving petitions may accomplish, prayers which have for their motive not only the good of some individual, but the good of those dependent upon him, yes, of the Church itself.

CHAPTER FOUR

AFTER PENTECOST

Such legends as that of St. Jude, and those of the other Apostles, to say nothing of the authentic and inspired account of the work of SS. Peter and Paul given us in the pages of the Acts of the Apostles, bring very vividly before our minds the dignity and laboriousness of the office and work of an Apostle, a bishop, in the Primitive Church. But most of all these narratives bring out the supernatural character of both office and work. It is not merely a story of toil and missionary labor, it is a tale of marvel, which leads us to the irresistible conclusion that if the external fruits of the apostleship were such, the internal powers and prerogatives of the office must be of a very high spiritual order. Which leads us to inquire how and when such gifts were bestowed upon men, what it was that changed these simple, rude fishermen, artizans,

clerks into men "that set the city in an uproar" (Acts 17:6). For after Pentecost the Apostles appear in a very different light to that which we see before that stupendous event.

This is interesting for our present purpose, because Judas was the only one of the Apostolic band who did not receive the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the Cenacle on Pentecost, the only one whose ministry was incomplete, indeed never really began. If only he could have weathered the storm, remained faithful, been made a complete partaker of those gifts of which he had obtained but part (Acts 1: 17), and that unworthily, what might he not also have become in the sacred history of the Church? We may reverently judge of this by comparison with what Pentecost did for the other Apostles, including St. Jude.

There was St. Peter, in a sense a traitor also, though in far less degree than Judas. Like the others, he forsook his Lord when the soldiers came to arrest Him in Gethsemane. We see him following afar off (Matthew 26: 58; Mark 14: 54; Luke 22: 54), as the soldiers drag his Master away to prison and to judgment, and we remember how, but a

few short hours before, he had boastfully promised: "Although all shall be scandalized in Thee, I will never be scandalized . . . yes, though I shall die with thee, I will not deny Thee" (Matthew 26:33 and 35). Yet now he slinks along on the outskirts of the crowd, fearful lest he also be arrested. And when in the courtyard of the palace of the High Priest, Peter crouched trembling over the little fire of coals kindled there, and was recognized by one and another of the servants passing to and fro, he thrice denied that he knew Jesus Christ, even as the Master had prophesied that he would. Then the cock crowed, for the morning of the day of Crucifixion was come, and the Lord turned, as He was being led away, and looked on His faithless, cowardly Apostle "and going forth he [Peter] wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:75). This triple denial, the result of yielding to human respect and the fear lest he also should be called upon to suffer and die, shows nothing more than the human weakness which characterized the Prince of the Apostles no less than the others. But it was followed by sincere repentance, and later by that threefold avowal of love for Christ which called forth the threefold commission of the

first Pope, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs," (John 21:15 and 16).

What made this weakness and perfidy all the more dreadful in St. Peter was the fact that he was already a priest. And the same might be said of the forsaking of Christ by the other Apostles. But—and here is the wonder and the glory of this sad incident—St. Peter came back to his Lord, penitent, as did they all—all save Judas, who closed the way of return by that last definitive act of sin, suicide. Who shall say that there was no place for penitence in his soul, even after he had accomplished his terrible purpose? St. Peter found penitence, pardon, and peace, and so did the others. They became witnesses to the Resurrection, they received the completion and fulfillment of their ordination after Easter, The Holy Ghost came upon them in His plenitude on Pentecost. And thereafter their whole life, their whole character, was changed, glorified, supernaturalized.

What a change, what a difference! That same St. Peter, who had been ashamed to own his Lord in the presence of the servant girl in the High Priest's palace, now stands before the whole city of Jerusalem preaching the wonderful works of God, declaring the Resurrection

of Jesus Christ (Acts 2: 14 to 36). Thereafter he works miracles (Acts 3: 1 to 9), stands boldly in the face of persecution (Acts 4: 1 to 13), goes forth to the gentiles to preach the Word, endures imprisonment (Acts 12: 1 to 11), undergoes untold privations and labors, and finally wins the martyr's crown in Rome. The same thing is true of every one of the other Apostles. Pentecost made new men of them, completed the work which Christ had begun in them, sent them forth dauntless, to work, to suffer, to die. Oh, what did not Judas miss!

Reference has been so often made in these pages to the ordination of the Apostles that it would seem both edifying and interesting to dwell upon the matter somewhat more at length. Just when and how were these first bishops of the Catholic Church ordained by Jesus Christ? Neither Holy Scripture nor the official teaching of the Church leaves us in doubt about this. We have already had something to say about the Vocation, the calling, of the Apostles by our Lord, and their preparation by Him for the work they were to do after He had left them. The Council of Trent has defined that Christ ordained the Apostles

to the sacred priesthood when, at the Last Supper at the moment of instituting the Eucharist, He pronounced the words "Do this for a commemoration of me" (Luke 22: 19). For, necessarily, in commanding them to perform that sacerdotal action, He gave them the power to fulfil that command. They were, then, from that moment, priests, yet not with the fullness of the priesthood which should be theirs before they were to set out on the actual work of their ministry. The offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the consecration of the elements to be verily and indeed the Body and Blood of Christ, is the chief work and the highest prerogative of the Priesthood, but it is not all. The commission to teach is part of the office of priests, committed especially, to the bishops, and by them delegated to the lower Orders of the hierarchy, and this Christ added before His Ascension, when He commanded them to go to all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28: 20).

But before this final commission, the Risen Lord had given to the Apostles the second great prerogative of priesthood, the power to forgive sins. This, to be sure, had been im-

plicitly bestowed upon them before the Crucifixion, during the time they spent with Him in His public ministry, when He promised to give to St. Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven" (Matthew 16:19). A little later this same supernatural power was promised to the other Apostles (Matthew 18:18) and finally, on the evening of Easter Day, when He had vindicated His claim to be indeed God by rising from the dead in His own divine power, when all power was given Him in Heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18), He completed the ordination of ten of the Apostles (St. Thomas not being present) by the reiteration of the formula: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:19 to 23).

We see a beautiful parallel to this in the ceremonies of Ordination to the priesthood as practiced by the Church to this day. Long years before that greatest of days in any man's life, there came the vocation, the call of Christ to follow Him, to become one of His chosen

priests. Through years of study and training the young Levite made his preparation, progressing through the Minor Orders until, at long last, the day of days dawned for him. Kneeling before the bishop, Apostolic hands are imposed upon him, the Holy Ghost invoked, his hands are consecrated with the Holy Oil of Catechumens, the sacred vessels containing the elements of bread and wine are given to him, and with them the power to consecrate them, transubstantiate them into the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. "Receive power," says the bishop, speaking in the name of Christ, "to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate the Mass, both for the living and for the dead. In the Name of the Lord. Amen." (*Pontificale Romanum, de Ordinatione Presbyteri*). The man is now a priest. With the ordaining prelate he celebrates Holy Mass. But it is not until the conclusion of the ceremony that the power of forgiving sins is conferred, in the very words Christ used when first He gave this power unto men. "Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins you remit, they are remitted; and whose you retain, they are retained." (*Ibid.*) Then, and only then, is the chasuble, the distinctive vestment of the priest,

fully unfolded, and another priest is added forever to the long line stretching backward through the ages to the Apostles, to Christ Himself, the Great High Priest, and forward to eternity.

If one should ask, "whence such unearthly and marvellous powers?" there is but one answer possible to Catholics. From Christ, by the Holy Ghost. Every ordination is another Pentecost. But this is not all. For the gift of the Holy Ghost is for all God's faithful children, according to their measure. He comes in Baptism, with His gifts, raising the soul to the supernatural state of sanctifying grace. In Confirmation this grace is augmented for the strengthening of the soul against the trials and temptations of life. One need not become a priest to receive the Holy Ghost, to have one's part and share in the gift of Pentecost. We sometimes hear the phrase "the priesthood of the laity," and it is, or should be, a phrase of deep and real meaning to us. For in Baptism we have all been sealed and consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ. Upon the brow of the tiny babe, of however humble birth, the sacred chrism is traced in the Sign of the Cross, no less than upon the breast of kings and the heads

of bishops. "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood," (I Peter 2:9), and the Apostle adds, "that you may declare His virtues, who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (*ibid.*)

What, then, have we to offer God, since priests, greater or less, must bring sacrifices and offerings? What but ourselves, our souls and bodies, which we present a living sacrifice, acceptable, pleasing unto God, our reasonable service as laymen even as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, nay, the offering of his whole life, is the due of the ordained priest. (Philippians 4:18; Romans 12:1.) We are not called to be Apostles, few of us can be priests, some, perhaps, religious, but all without exception are called to the perfect service of God, called to offer up to Him sacrifices and a sweet savor, by living good Catholic lives, denying ourselves sinful pleasures, keeping the faith, and so being a constant good example to others, the strongest sermon that can possibly be preached.

All this has much to do with devotion to St. Jude, or any other Apostle. And all this is the exact opposite of what we have learned of Judas; it is his example reversed into warning. What St. Jude was, Judas might have been.

What Judas was, we may be—God forbid! The possibilities—the contrasts. How they throng upon us. The wonder of that ministry to which every one of us is called, how it all but crushes us. And would, indeed, fill us with nothing but awe and dread and the sense of our own insufficiency, were it not for our confidence that God, who has begun the good work in us will continue it, if we be faithful and do our part, unto the end (Philippians 1:6). When we see how the Apostles were changed by their priesthood, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, from weak, vacillating, even unbelieving men, we can form some idea of what God's grace can do for us, will do for us if only we coöperate with it. Shall we not, then, pray to the Saint whose example we are studying, for his aid in the work we have to do, the truly Apostolic work of saving our own souls and the souls of others?

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVOTION TO ST. JUDE

There is something very satisfactory in the modern revival of devotion to St. Jude. For he would seem to be the only one of the Apostles who is in the minds of Catholics today. Popular devotion has a way of, so to speak, running after the newest Saints, and though no one can find serious fault with this devotional tendency, and there are many good reasons for it, still there is something to be said for the more ancient devotions which have influenced Catholic life down through the ages. Devotion to St. Jude is one of these, for from the earliest times he has been recognized as a patron and helper in cases which, to all human calculations, seemed hopeless. In the Middle Ages the Ven. Columba, the Dominican, fostered this devotion. St. Bernard of Clairvaux was another famous and saintly client of the Apostle. During his life he honored a relic of St. Jude and

requested that it be placed upon his breast and buried with him, saying that he would not wish to be entirely without him who had been the protector of his purity and a powerful helper in emergencies.

Devotion to the Saints is an integral part of practical Catholic life. The "Friends of God" are not regarded by us as purely decorative, worthy a place in colored windows and as works of art upon altars, but seeking to influence the hearts and minds of men and women, who turn to them for the encouragement of lofty example and for that intercession which can obtain the graces necessary to follow the example given so heroically. The rule that the name of some Saint shall be imposed upon the child in Baptism, and the custom of thus commemorating the particular Saint on whose feastday the child was born, or to whom the parents have a special devotion, tends to foster belief, practical belief, in the Communion of Saints, that dogma of the Creed so little understood by those outside the fold of the Catholic Church.

There should be no need to justify by argument such practices as the Invocation of the Saints, the Veneration of Relics, and the as-

cription to this or that holy personage of favors and graces obtained through their intercession. Asking the Saints to pray for us is at once the most Scriptural and the most natural practice imaginable. St. Paul, after having addressed his fellow-Christians by the title of Saints, asks them to pray for him, and assures them of his own prayers in their behalf. A firm belief in immortality, together with a proper understanding of the teaching regarding the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Catholic Church, at once makes entirely reasonable the thesis that those whose prayers we may ask while they are still on earth may be even more useful to us once they have attained the Beatific Vision. Prayers *to* the Saints, and prayers *for* the Dead have ever gone hand in hand in Catholic devotional life, from the very beginning. There has been, in both, a certain development in both doctrine and practice, but there can be no doubt that both have been the ordinary custom of Christians from the earliest times. What more natural than for the bystanders to request a martyr, being led out to seal his faith with his blood, to remember them when he has won his crown? What more human than that souvenirs of such a one should be eagerly

sought and reverently preserved? It was but a step from the memorial stele of the Catacombs to the statue of the Saint in the church dedicated to his memory and placed under his heavenly patronage.

It is the characteristic of the Saint that in life he stands out preeminently as a man of God, and gathers about him those whose interest is centered in the things of God. Heroic virtue cannot but attract human weakness, for we all look for help to those who show in themselves the strength we lack. If to this natural attraction he adds the supernatural power of miracles, whether during his life or after his death, we become more and more impressed with the fact that here is one who can both understand and help us: understand because he also was compassed with infirmity; help because by God's grace he has been enabled to overcome those very weaknesses which we ask him to obtain grace for us to overcome.

Even in their lifetime certain Saints become known for certain virtues, and we may be permitted to suppose that they still, humanly speaking, maintain their interest in them after they have been rewarded for their own heroic practice of them. We are all familiar with cer-

tain attributes of certain Saints, St. John's love for the Sacred Heart, St. Thomas' unswerving faith triumphing over doubts. The interest in children and young people evinced by St. Nicholas of Myra, which has made his name a household word, albeit in a corrupt form so changed that his modern clients hardly recognize him. One might run through the list of the chosen patrons of various arts and industries, professions and even sports, each so obviously chosen by the Church on account of some outstanding characteristic. St. Christopher carries the Christ Child in safety across the swollen river, and we place his image on our automobiles and ask him to see to it that we go our way in safety. SS. Crispin and Crispinian plied their cobbler's trade quite simply, and became Saints in doing so, and they were quite naturally assigned, in the Middle Ages when the guilds were the trades unions, as the patrons of those who earned their living, and ought to win their salvation, in the same business. SS. Cosmas and Damian were barbers, and the pious Catholic might well add their invocation to his striped pole which comes to him from those same middle Ages when a noble family was proud to bear that charge on its es-

cutcheon. A modern assignment makes St. Gabriel, the Archangel, the Patron of mail-carriers, our Lady of Lourdes of aviators, officially superceding the more informal choices of St. Elias and our Lady of the flying House of Loreto. But the patronal titles of Mary are innumerable, as might be expected of the Queen and Patroness of the Saints themselves, and the Mother of us all! Among the Saints of Holy Scripture, St. Andrew is quite fittingly the patron of fishermen, St. Peter being occupied with weightier concerns; St. Luke of artists and glass-workers; St. James the Less of hatters (having met his martyrdom by a blow on the head!); St. Thomas of architects, perhaps because his faith was laid upon the foundation of sight; St. Mark looks after the notaries, having served St. Paul in that capacity himself; St. Timothy is invoked against stomach trouble, having had need of treatment therefor; and, finally, St. Jude is regarded as a sort of last resort in desperate troubles, though the reasons for this, historically speaking, are not so easy to determine.

But, as in the other instances, there is a definite fitness in the choice of so great an Apostle as a patron in cases of dire need. For

the Apostles, of all the Saints, are surely, in Heaven as they were in this world, closest to their King, next to the Queen Mother herself. If we are seeking "friends at court", why not go to the inner circle, the official family, so to speak, of the Monarch whose favors we implore? Not but what the least Saint in that blessed kingdom is closer to Him than we! Which leads me to remark that, perhaps, the chief reason for the popularity of the newer Saints may be the fact that we somehow think of them as being closer to us, because they lived so short a time ago, and their conditions and circumstances were so much more nearly like ours than those of the Saints of ancient times.

I would be the last to decry devotion to the newer Saints. The Church has set her infallible mark of approval upon such devotion by raising them to her altars. They have a charm and an appeal which is all their own. But we ought to be careful lest our devotion to them should lead us to neglect their elders in the kingdom, or forget the long ages during which they have served their clients on earth only less faithfully than they have served their Lord, and ours, in Heaven. It is interesting to note, in reading the lives of those modern Saints, that

they had special devotion to this or that holy personage before them, who may have been one of "the new Saints" of their time, but is (it cannot be mere chance) usually one of the Apostles, or great Saints of antiquity. Then, too, in going back to the Apostles for our devotions we are reminding ourselves in a very forcible manner of the identity of the Church of our own day with the Church of theirs. After all, the Church is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles" (Ephesians 2:20), and they were the first Saints, and the greatest. The Church herself teaches us this, by the rank she gives to their feastdays.

The matter of the Invocation of Saints is intimately bound up with the whole theological doctrine on prayer. It will be enough if we remind ourselves that the Saints pray for us by divine permission, that our requests are made known to them by God in order that they may exercise themselves in our behalf, and that their prayers, no less than ours, are offered "through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is a mystical and mysterious process, which we can but dimly understand, but of which we may avail ourselves in very practical ways. It is *de fide* that the Saints can and do pray for us, and that

is, really, all we need to know about it. Every instructed Catholic holds this belief, and every practical Catholic acts upon it, and makes the Invocation of the Saints a part of his daily devotions. And it is part of the universality of the Catholic Church that she offers us so wide a range for our devotions, each nation, trade, profession, yes individual, finding in the galaxy of the Blessed in Heaven just the sort of patron most suited (again, humanly speaking) to his needs. Aside from devotions to the Blessed Virgin, not one Saint is imposed upon the faithful as an object of such devotion as might be called necessary. Multitudes of devotions are "approved," none are imposed as of obligation. Some are encouraged more than others. In a sense some are official, special days being assigned to them, of an outstanding rank, with a Mass and Office of their own. Day by day the great procession of the Saints passes before the altar of their King, their names are called by the Church Militant, their intercession claimed by the official prayer of the Church. But to the private individual is left the wide choice of devotions so numerous that a catalogue of them would fill a larger book than this. That one locality, one nation, or one age should show a

greater interest in one Saint than another, is but natural. That one who has a special devotion to a certain Saint, from whom he believes that he has received favors, should seek to propagate that devotion is, again, but natural. Provided the Church has approved of that devotion, it is quite right to be enthusiastic about it. And, since the Saints refer all the glory we can possibly give to them to Christ their Lord, we may reverently suppose that they are pleased by the honor and veneration we show them as their clients. There is even reason to suppose that they are displeased when they are neglected, and it certainly is not the mind of the Church to pass by any of the Saints, for has she not instituted the glorious Feast of All Saints, lest any of that "multitude which no man can number" (Apocalypse 7: 9) should be deprived of the mead of praise which we, who are still in our pilgrimage, are permitted to offer them, not so much for their glory as for our comfort and encouragement.

In an age so marked by materialism, so dependent upon itself and its own inventions, it is well that the minds of men should turn to such devotions as that to St. Jude, for in hailing him as a wonder-worker in desperate cases

the admission is made that the supernatural is, after all, as real as what we call the natural, and that, when all human means have failed, help may yet be found in God. We are sometimes told that we ought not to expect miracles, yet where is our faith if we do not? Of course we are not worthy of them, but are not miracles usually performed on behalf of those whose need, rather than whose deserts, are so recognized by God and His servants? We are not worthy of the least of God's mercies. Yet we pray, and ask in faith and confidence, for the greatest of them. It is this perfectly natural and perfectly right sense of our unworthiness which leads us to implore the intercession of the Saints, whom God has made worthy to name Him and call upon Him. The greater our need, the more earnest our prayer, and the more special the advocate we invoke. Artists in depicting the glory of Heaven represent the Blessed Virgin as kneeling directly before the Throne of Grace, and the Apostles as standing closest around, or enthroned, according to our Lord's promise, on His right hand and on His left. If we select one of the Twelve, whom He also selected for special closeness to Himself, as our patron and intercessor, we shall be quite

in line with the mind of the Church, which is, as St. Paul tells us, the mind of Christ. And if, for centuries, one of the Apostles has been known as the special helper of those in dire and extreme necessity, shall we not invoke him with every confidence, that he may help us as he has helped countless clients in the past?

CHAPTER SIX

HIS MARTYRDOM

St. Jude, the Apostle and martyr—Judas Iscariot, the traitor and suicide—what a contrast! Yet both these men met violent deaths, as, indeed, all the Apostles did, with the exception of St. John. Nothing could be more different than these two ways of leaving the world, martyrdom and suicide. They have nothing in common, except the fact that death ensues. Nor does the difference cease when that phenomenon of natural dissolution has definitely taken place. We might even say that there is more difference in the world to come than there is in this.

Traditions about the martyrdom of St. Jude are slight and conflicting. It would seem that he was beaten with clubs and his head cleft with a broadaxe, which is his symbol in Christian art. His relics were brought to Rome and enshrined in the Vatican Basilica (St. Peter's)

and his feastday is October 28th, when he is commemorated with his fellow-apostle St. Simon, with whom, in all probability he shared his martyrdom. St. Jude died for the faith, a witness to Christ, because his preaching of the new religion had stirred up the enmity of the pagans. That is the history, in the briefest possible form, of the martyrdom of all the Apostles.

As we have seen in the forepart of this book, Judas lacked faith, and died as he did because of that lack. Had he really believed he might have repented, as St. Peter did, and been forgiven, for great as was his crime, it would not be beyond the loving mercy of Christ to pardon it, since he has again and again forgiven even worse sins. The despair of Judas was the direct consequence of his loss of faith, which in turn, was brought about by his habitual yielding to his besetting sin. Exactly the opposite is true of St. Jude, or of any other martyr. He gave up his life in witness to the faith, and he was able to do so because his faith was living, growing, more and more vital every day that he practised and preached it.

The phenomenon of martyrdom, which characterises not only the early Church, but the

Catholic Church everywhere and always, is something more than an evidence of fanatic enthusiasm. Other religions have had martyrs but no other religion has ever produced them in such enormous numbers, or shown anything like the same spirit of devotion in the character of those who offer their lives in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, (Philippians 1:7). It is estimated that, before the reign of the Emperor Constantine brought the age of persecution to a close, over a million Catholics won the martyr's crown in the City of Rome alone. Old men and small boys, virgins and matrons, the full list of their names is known to God alone, though hundreds of them are venerated in the Martyrology of the Church. The first thirty-one Popes, occupying the Holy See during a period of more than two hundred and fifty years, were martyrs. And this in but one city of the Roman Empire, to say nothing of the pagan lands in which the Apostles and their successors preached the Gospel. Long after the Church had emerged from the catacombs and found peace and power in the Eternal City, the office of missionary was a sure way to martyrdom, and this continued to be true almost to our own day. And now, two

thousand years from the foundation of the Catholic Church, we have our martyrs still, even in the New World, yes, at our very doors, and priests and nuns, men and women, boys and girls, in Mexico are giving up their lives for the faith, winning the martyr's crown even while these words are being written. "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal" (John 12:25). In these words of our Blessed Lord we have the key both to the supernatural courage of the martyrs and to the despairing weakness of those tragic failures who take their own life as Judas did. To the Saint, the martyr, but one thing matters, and that is the faith. To the Judases of this world, only self matters, and when self is thwarted, when self fails, despair comes with an overwhelming force that seems, to their sin-distorted vision, to leave no way out except death.

I am not now speaking of those whose minds become unhinged, either as the result of their evil living, or, through no fault of their own, by disease. The suicide of the really insane is blameless, because they are not responsible, being incapable of a human act. It has become

the fashion of our time to make the excuse of insanity for every suicide, and, to spare the feelings of the living, the Church accepts the verdict of the civil authorities and grants the rites of Christian burial to those who are legally declared insane when they have died by their own hand. We will not press the question as to how much responsibility may remain in any given case, nor will we inquire too closely whether or not the insanity which resulted in self-destruction was brought on by the personal sin and wrong-doing of the victim. Too often we know in our hearts that such is the case, though we seek to draw the all-covering cloak of charity over those poor unfortunate souls, and pray that God may be no less merciful than man in His judgment of them.

But it sometimes happens that a man may become so desperate, as a result of his own wrongdoing, or of the sins of others, that death seems the only way out of the difficulties which throng upon him. There is no question here of insanity; he knows what he is doing, and he is responsible for his actions. It is rank injustice to those who are really suffering from mental disease to classify such a one with them. The

end of a long career of sin has brought the total extinguishment of faith, which we call despair. And despair means one of two things—either that the man does not believe that God *can* forgive his sin, in which case he lacks faith in the almightiness of God; or else that he does not believe that God *will* forgive him, and that means a limitation of God's love and mercy. Either way the soul has made shipwreck concerning the faith (1 Timothy 1:19) and brought upon itself the guilt of the unpardonable sin, which is final impenitence.

That was the condition of the mind and heart of Judas when he went out and hanged himself. It was not merely that he had betrayed his Lord; that was bad enough, but it was not unpardonable. In its way it was no worse than St. Peter's denial, no worse than the cowardice of the others, who all forsook Him and fled (Matthew 26:56). Indeed, you and I have done something just as terrible if and when we have fallen into any mortal sin. But the other Apostles had faith, and they came back, they were forgiven, they were reinstated, they were even endowed with power from on high which so changed them that they went forth and eventually became martyrs for the name of the

same Lord whom they had denied and forsaken.

Faith and hope are supernatural, theological, divine virtues no less than charity. They form a holy trinity and are always found together. On the other hand, the lack of any one of them, or its obscuration, brings inevitably a weakening and final destruction of the others. You see how it was with Judas. His sin was avarice, the opposite of charity. Constant yielding to that sin impaired his faith, and at the end his hope perished and he fell into despair. Exactly the reverse process took place in the soul of St. Jude and the other faithful Apostles. Beginning with love for Christ, at first a purely human love and regard which little by little made divine love possible and progressed to that unswerving faith for which they were ready to lay down their lives, they added hope, and this was the message they preached to the end.

What discouragements they had to meet and overcome we can only dimly imagine. They had, first of all, their own weaknesses and temptations to master by the grace and help of God. St. Paul gives us some insight into this when he cries out, over and over again, deplor-

ing his weakness, quenching his pride in the water of his penitential tears, learning ever more and more to depend entirely upon that grace which was sufficient for him and which was made perfect in his infirmities (2 Corinthians 12: 9). As they went forth to preach the Gospel in obedience to the command of their Divine Lord, they met with constant and uninterrupted opposition, first from their own people and nation, then from the heathen, to whom they turned when Israel had rejected their message. True, they gathered a great harvest of souls, converted whole nations, turned the world upside down (Acts 17: 6), but at what a cost! Had not the apostolic zeal of their divine charity been linked to their deathless faith and buoyed up by their ever-upspringing hope, could they have mastered the difficulties that beset them, gone on in spite of opposition, persecution, disappointment, to give up their lives finally as the supreme evidence of their unswerving loyalty to their Lord? And they died, every one of them, with the great mission unfulfilled, only begun, to be left to others to carry on in their stead, confident that it would be carried on, that the work they had started would go on, and on, that their martyr's blood

should be verily and indeed the seed of the Church.

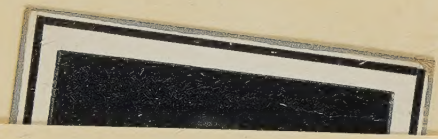
We are not Apostles, and it is very unlikely indeed that any of us will be found worthy to be martyrs. Yet we have the same faith as these heroes of the faith, ours is the same eternal hope, and ours should be the same divine charity which made them what they were. Difficult as it may be for any of us to attain their sanctity, it is easy enough for us to sink to the depths of the shame and degradation of Judas. At the close of our little study of these possibilities and contrasts of the spiritual life, we must bravely face both these facts: we shall probably not become great Saints, and we shall very likely become great sinners unless we make better use of the grace of God, unless we cultivate more actively the virtues of the one and shun with greater fear the sins of the other. Yet, no one of us can tell to what heights God may call him, or from what depths God may deliver him. It is quite true that we have, each of us, the possibilities within us of every sin, but it is equally true, thank God, that we have, every one of us, the capacity for the most heroic virtues. If there is, as has been said, a Judas within each one of us, laying in wait to

betray the Son of Man with a kiss, there is also a Jude in each one of us, to lead us, little by little, to the highest virtue and sanctity. If we are not called to be martyrs, we *are* called to be confessors of the faith, not by mere lip-service, but by the sacrificial offering of our lives, ourselves, our souls and bodies, our thoughts, words and actions to God in the great vocation of saving our souls and thus rendering the greatest glory to Him that we, as individuals, are capable of.

One of the surest ways of attaining this consummation of life, so devoutly to be wished for, is that cultus of the Saints which seeks to imitate their virtues and acquire their spirit. It is better, after all, to emulate a good man than to shun the example of a bad man, better to be positive in our efforts than merely negative, best of all to seek to practice virtue than just to avoid sin. This is a lesson very much needed in our time, for too many of us are contented if we only keep ourselves free from the stain of mortal sin, too few of us seek to go on to positive and solid goodness. We lack spiritual ambition, we are far from having the spirit of the Saints, and so are always in danger of falling back rather than going forward. Indeed, for

many if not most of us, the case is desperate, and so we are fit subjects for the intercession and help of St. Jude.

"Aeterna fac cum Sanctis tuis in gloria numerari" is the prayer of the Church for each and every one of her children. "Make us to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting." Saints we must be, greater or less, (Oh, so much less than any now in glory) before ever we can enter into that eternal communion and fellowship for which, in the mercy of God, we are destined. How can we wait a single day before beginning the long task of seeking sanctity? How dare we rob a single moment from that great work to enjoy the pleasures of sin? We have the good example, we have the awful warning, we have at our disposal the grace that alone makes the task possible of success. It remains for us to follow the good example, to heed the terrible warning, to make full use of the abounding and sufficient grace. Then we can leave the rest to God.



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